

THE SWEDENBORGIAN:

A NEW-CHURCH MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

VOL. IV.]

FEBRUARY, 1860.

[No. 2.

LEE'S ESCHATOLOGY.*

WE have more than once had occasion to call the attention of our readers to what we regard as the providential and *orderly* manner in which the Lord's New Church is descending upon earth, into the minds and hearts of men. We have insisted that the progress of the New Church is not to be measured by the numerical increase of those who read and avow themselves receivers of its doctrines, but by quite a different sort of yardstick—by the gradual rejection or modification of the old dogmas, one after another, by the various Christian sects, and the steady inflowing among them of the light and life of the New Dispensation—the *names*, and written *creeds* also, remaining still the same. It is plain enough, that the day is breaking in all the churches. The best minds among all the sects are receiving—some through

* Eschatology ; or, the Scripture Doctrine of the coming of the Lord, the Judgment, and the Resurrection. By SAMUEL LEE. Boston : J. E. Tilton & Co., 1859.

books and periodicals, but more through what we term common influx—the glorious truths of the New Jerusalem, and communicating them to other minds, through sermons, lectures, newspapers and books. One man receives the truth respecting the supreme and exclusive divinity of Christ; another, that concerning regeneration; another, that concerning the resurrection, judgment, second appearing of the Lord, &c.; and each proclaims what he receives, but *calls* it by the name of his particular sect. And so the light is being diffused. The New truths are being scattered broadcast among all the sects—scattered, too, all the more successfully and rapidly, because they bear the outer stamp of the old coin—are labelled in different places, “Universalism,” “Presbyterianism,” “Unitarianism,” &c. But the Lord cares not by what particular *names* men choose to label his truth; then why should we? So that what they receive *be* the truth, and be permitted to sink deep into the heart, and bring forth the fruits of holy living, the perfume which ascends to heaven may be presumed to be as fragrant under one name as another.

In our last November issue, we showed how extensively the truths of the New Church had been incorporated into that excellent volume of sermons, by the Rev. Mr. Caird, lately published by the Messrs. Carter and Brothers. And here we have another volume, professedly doctrinal and critical in its character, from the pen of a clergyman of our own country, who “attaches great importance to a sound reputation for sound orthodoxy.” Yet the author, writing professedly in the interests of “sound orthodoxy,” makes the saddest kind of havoc with the “orthodoxy” that was acknowledged a hundred, or even fifty years ago.

“*Eschatology*”—the doctrine concerning the final consummation of all things—involving the doctrine concern-

ing the second coming of the Lord, the end of the world, the general resurrection and judgment, is not a strictly New Church work by any means. Still, there is in it quite a preponderance of the New over the Old theology. Indeed, on none of the points discussed in the volume, do we find the old dogmas affirmed. The prevailing beliefs, or what *were* the prevailing beliefs of the Christian church a century ago—for it is difficult to say what they are now—concerning the second coming of the Lord, the end of the world, the resurrection, and the general judgment, are most emphatically rejected by Mr. Lee, and their falsity and want of agreement with the teachings of Scripture, clearly shown. “In respect to the several subjects discussed,” this writer says, “the *facts* are essentially the same with the ‘most straightest’ orthodoxy, in all save the *time when*.” But *we* discover that the facts, according to Mr. Lee’s exegesis, differ from the “most straightest orthodoxy” in the *manner how*; quite as much as in the *time when*.

For example : he affirms the *fact* of a resurrection—a resurrection of every man ; but he rejects the old ideas both as to the *nature* and *time* of the resurrection, and adopts substantially the New Church view. “The language of the Saviour,” he says, “forbids the hypothesis that *anastasis* means the raising to life of the dead body at a distant future day. Its import is, that when a man dies as to his body, he is still alive,” (p. 171.) He utterly repudiates the old idea “of a union of the soul to its body” at some distant day, and maintains that this is *not* the Bible doctrine of the resurrection. “God will raise up *us*,” he says, “not our bodies.” The term [*ex-gerei*—1 Cor. vi. 14], is applied to the whole man. Will *he* live and be blessed after death ? is the question answered in the text. The body is to be destroyed, v. 13. If the Anastasis had any special reference to the *body*, it

would have been made prominent here," (p. 175.) He believes "that there is at present in the composition of man, a *two-fold body*," one of which (according to his translation of 1 Cor. xv. 44,) is "an *animal-life* body," the other "a *mind* body." "The animal-life body," he says, "is the first in the order of development, and subserves the purposes of the present life. The mind body is at present in a sort of embryo state, and to be born at the death of the present body, when the corruptible shall give place to the incorruptible." The Resurrection spoken of in the New Testament, he maintains, is "the development and commencing exercise of the spiritual body," which takes place, he thinks, at the death of the natural body; and he insists, that the apostolic doctrine of the Anastasis "is *not* the modern doctrine of the Resurrection," (p. 190.) "To make the anastasis of Christ, or that of his disciples, relate to a question of corporeity, is infinitely to belittle the subject—is to take its very soul from much of the gospel of Christ," (p. 184.) Certainly, then, this writer differs from the old theology not less as to the *nature*, or *manner how*, of the Resurrection, than as to the *time when*. And how closely his views on this subject, approximate those of the New Church, will be apparent to all our readers. Indeed, it cannot be said that there is any real difference, so far as the author has settled convictions on the subject; for he appears to be yet in doubt whether the "*mind* body" exists in us now in a developed and active state, or whether it is at present in embryo, and to be born when the natural body dies—a question which we are content to leave one of his philosophic turn of thought to settle for himself, not doubting but in due time he will settle it in the right way.

Then look at his view of the Scripture teaching in regard to the "end of the world"—a doctrine that has figured so extensively in the old theology. We find here

the same departure from the Old, and the same approximation towards the New Church doctrine on this subject as on that of the resurrection. The New Church teaches that no such event as "the end of the world" is anywhere foretold in the Sacred Scripture, but that the passages so translated are *mis-translations*. The word in the original* Greek translated *world*, is, in all the instances referred to, *αἰών*, which means *age* or *dispensation*, but never *world*. And in the writings of Swedenborg, the passage rendered "the end of the world," is uniformly translated "the consummation of the age;" that is, *the end of the Dispensation*, when, of course, a new Age or Dispensation would be inaugurated. And hear what Mr. Lee says upon the same subject, near the close of his book :

"We have not found the Bible teaching an 'end of the world.' An end of the then present *αἰών* (dispensation) it does, indeed, teach, but no end of ~~the~~ *κόσμος*, world." (p. 252.) Again he says, "And the harvest was the end of *this dispensation*"—instead of "the end of the world," as the common version has it (p. 144.) And again :

"'If the "end of the world" is not taught in 2 Pet. iii., it is not taught in the Bible.' So said a distinguished living theologian to the writer. With great veneration for the many good men who have taught us a different doctrine, we respectfully submit that it is not taught here. The Bible is entirely silent in regard to the future geological history of the globe we inhabit, as also any astronomical changes. . . . Are we asked, What is to become of the earth?—we answer, We do not know—any more than we know what is to become of Jupiter, or any one or all of the fixed stars. The earth has been in existence, probably, many millions of years. We know no reason why it should not exist forever," (pp. 113, 114.)

What an approximation again to the New Church view ! For Swedenborg, one hundred years ago, declared, "that neither the visible heaven nor the habitable earth will perish, but that both will remain forever." .

So, too, the second coming of the Lord, according to this writer, is not to be in person, upon the natural clouds, as Christians generally have believed, and as the Bible, literally interpreted, would seem to teach. He maintains that this phrase, "the coming of the Lord"—which means, according to the strict rendering of the original Greek, *the being present* of the Lord—is identical in import with "the revelation of Jesus Christ," which he thinks is not to be in fulness until after the death of the body. He holds that "the coming of the Lord" is a phrase "significant of a great fact or group of facts in the history of man," to which death is simply an introduction, or the first in the series. The glory of the Lord, he thinks, is not and cannot be revealed to man, until after death. "Heaven," he says, "begins at death. 'To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.' Then the revelation of Christ will be at death," (p. 88.) What he means by the "group of facts" to which death will introduce us, and which he supposes "the Coming," "the Parousia," or *being present* of the Lord refers to, may be gathered from the following paragraph :

"When the present mode of existence ends, another succeeds, in which, in a method not known to us now, we shall have a power of perceiving spiritual beings, and especially of recognizing Christ, that will be as impressive, as influential upon our practical convictions, as is now the sense of sight. The Saviour will *appear*. So of the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect. So of all the realities of the spiritual world. Then, too, will terminate the educational and probationary processes of this life, and an order of consequences commence from that time. To the saints it will be heaven. . . . To the wicked it will be hell," (pp. 75, 76.)

It will be seen from this that Mr. Lee has quite abandoned the old materialistic doctrine in regard to the second appearing of the Lord, and made a long and

hopeful stride in the right direction. He has really grasped a great truth, which is, that the predicted second coming is spiritual, not natural. And the reasons why he has failed to grasp the *whole* truth on this subject, appear to be these: 1st. Because he has not yet come into the full acknowledgment of the supreme or proper Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ; does not yet perceive Him to be the very Divine Wisdom or Word, which was in the beginning with God, and is God. 2d. Because he is yet in doubt whether there be a spiritual body already developed and active within man's material body; and consequently in doubt whether man, as to his spirit, can be living, unconsciously, in the spiritual world while yet in the flesh. If the author could see clearly the truth on these two points, he would see that the promised second coming of the Lord must be the coming of the Word; that is, the coming to the minds and hearts of men of a higher and better understanding of the Word—a coming of its true spiritual meaning. And since man in this world is really a spirit robed in flesh, he would see that the second coming, although spiritual, may take place before we enter, consciously, the spiritual world. We do not deny, however, that the glory of the Lord will be more fully revealed to all his children in the spiritual world than it has been in this. The light of the spiritual sense of the Word, will then be more manifest to all eyes. Therefore there is truth in this author's view of the second coming, though it is not the *whole* truth. The great event in the world's history, pointed at by the prophetic language of Scripture on this subject, he has failed to grasp—and that is, the opening and revealing unto men of the spiritual sense of the Word, and the great facts and laws of the spiritual world. Such a revelation is the coming of light to hu-

man minds—consequently the coming of Him who is declared to be “the light of the world.”

The old doctrine concerning the Last Judgment is also rejected by this writer. He maintains, consistently with his view of the Second Coming, that the judgment also takes place in the spiritual world, and that its commencement is “synchronical with death.” He does not seem to have any very definite idea of the *nature* of the judgment, or of the means by which it is performed. “The judgment of this world,” he thinks, “*began when* Jesus was glorified ;” and is consummated so far as relates to each individual, soon after death. He insists that “*a day of judgment*” “contemplates men as going individually each to his ‘day of judgment.’”—“Each man has his personal day of account with Jesus Christ,” (p. 131.) This, also, is in accordance with the teachings of the New Church ; but it is only a *part* of the truth. The general judgment, which took place in the world of spirits more than a century ago, he, of course, does not recognize, and therefore says nothing about.

This writer further maintains, in strict accordance with the teachings of the New Church, that heaven is not a *place*, but a *state* ; consequently that it may be said to be wherever there are people who are in a heavenly state of mind. “Heaven, then,” he says, “is a *state* rather than a *place*. But the place in this instance is where living men are found,” (p. 116.) “The realization of heaven would not imply a change of place, but of state,” (117.) “We do not *go up* to heaven ; heaven *comes down* to us. The scene is here—in the atmosphere of this world,” (118.) “Heaven may be, and sometimes is, on earth,” (ib.) We do not know how the author reconciles this with his declaration in another place (p. 88), that “heaven *begins* at death.” There is a sense, we think, in which he must admit that it begins before death. Nor do we quite

understand how he can admit anything like association or the "mingling" of men and angels, so long as he remains in doubt whether men in the flesh have spiritual bodies in a developed and active state. Yet, referring to that passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which "represents the Christian as brought by his faith to Mount Zion—to an innumerable multitude, the general assembly of angels," &c, he remarks: "This would seem to imply the mingling together of the good of both worlds." But how can there be any "mingling" of angels with men, unless, within our fleshly tabernacles, we have already spiritual bodies akin to those of the angels? Angels and men together, according to Swedenborg, constitute what Paul calls "the whole family in heaven and upon earth;" for, writing a hundred years ago, he said: "I can asseverate from all my experience of heaven, and from all my discourse with the angels, that no angel or spirit subsists apart from man, and no man apart from spirits and angels, but that there is a mutual and reciprocal conjunction," (*L. J. 9.*)

Mr. Lee believes in religious and *theological* progress. He believes that more and higher truth is yet to be unfolded from the Word of the Lord; but when, or how, or by what instrumentalities, he does not tell us. But he urges, what we most earnestly urge, a humble, watchful, prayerful attitude of mind, and the exercise of a large and tolerant spirit. It is at once interesting, and deeply significant, to hear a minister in the orthodox ranks, discourse in the following strain:

"There are topics on which the public mind is in an especial state of unrest. The subject of this volume belongs to this class. The formularies above quoted, do not satisfy the common mind of the church. And it is asking for light. The doctrine of Inspiration needs to be examined. And as bearing, not only on the subject discussed in these pages, but on others, and some of them the most momentous of

our holy religion, the question of *what is and what is not tropical language*, needs a thorough investigation. On this subject, we think the language of Robinson may be applied with special emphasis: 'The Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of his holy Word.' The attitude in which for the church to be found, then, is that of incitement to investigation, and of willingness to receive more light. And let her tolerance and her encouragement be extended to the humblest of her sons, who would hope to shed, if but one and the feeblest ray of light upon what are yet regions of comparative darkness and obscurity," (pp. 259, 260.)

And with the spirit and sentiments of the following paragraph we heartily concur. They are such as a liberal minded New Churchman might have uttered, but exceedingly unlike what we have hitherto met with in "orthodox" publications. But we are delighted to find such sentiments coming from such a quarter. It is one of the signs of the times, and indicates, while it must tend to promote, that growing progress, freedom, and unity in the churches, for which the hearts of so many good men devoutly yearn.

"We shall perhaps be pardoned, if, in this connection, we say, in plea of a charitable estimate of our humble volume, that this is a day, unlike any other, of independent thinking. The community are educated as never before, and trained to habits of reading and *study*. The literature of the day is addressed, as was not that of a former period, to the reasoning faculty. Our civil functions, even, encourage every man, as sharing in the responsibilities of his nation's governmental administration, to think for himself. Authority no longer forms the creeds of men, political or religious. The Past does it not. We must see for ourselves. So it should be. And we have derived erroneous inferences from facts that have fallen under our observation, if there are not many readers of the Bible, who are pursuing an original investigation, and forming their own independent creeds. We have found the man of gray hairs in this attitude, and those of younger years in such numbers, as to justify, we think, the inference that the Spirit of God is, by an all-pervading influence, leading the lovers of truth right to the fountain.

"If this be so, then, while we may expect a general agreement, we shall have, of course, in greater number than before, specific differences. And our charity must adjust itself into harmony with its obligations in the premises. Men must and will think for themselves. And the cry of *heresy* will not deter those who are *of the day* from this duty and privilege. Far from it. On the other hand, it will have the effect to drive those, whom the church and orthodoxy most need, into relations other than those of the most effective auxiliaryship. Unity with variety is the order of things in nature. And if, in the sphere of theological opinions and functions, that variety is a little in excess, and includes some error, that excess is a less evil than the want of unity," (pp. 258, 259.)

We had marked several other passages for insertion, but must omit them for lack of room. But our readers will see, from those we have given, how far the author has departed from the old orthodox standards, and how closely he has approximated the views of the New Church on the several themes discussed. We are not sorry for this. We are glad, indeed, to have the truth circulate under any name whatever ; and where, as in the book before us, we cannot have it in its purity, we are satisfied to have it so mingled with error, as to be rendered palatable to those who, perhaps, could not receive it in a purer form. We are satisfied that many who read this work will not stop here. They will see its defects, and doubtless be able to separate the tares from the wheat. The book is interesting to New Churchmen chiefly as indicating the steady undermining or giving way of old errors, and the insemination of new truths among the different sects, and the providential methods by which this is being accomplished.

The author is evidently familiar with the writings of Prof. Bush ; for he speaks of his work on the Resurrection in the second paragraph of his preface, calling it "that volume of brilliant truths and startling errors."

It may fairly be presumed, therefore, that he has read the writings of Swedenborg, and that many of the views in his book have been drawn from that source. And it is much to be regretted, therefore, that he should have mentioned the name of the great Swede—the only instance, too, in which he has mentioned it—in connection with that of Joe Smith, the Mormon; thereby casting contempt—whether intentionally or not, we presume not to say—upon one of God's purest and noblest servants, and one to whom Mr. Lee himself is, directly or indirectly, more indebted for all that is of special interest or value in his book, than to all other writers. We are sorry for this; and we have no doubt but the author himself, will one day be sorry for it; we are sure he will, if he be, as we trust, a regenerating man. B.

EQUILIBRIUM.

BY JOHN DOUGHTY.

The subject of Equilibrium, has proved a great stumbling-block to many who are looking towards the New Church. It is a weapon in the hands of its assailants which is used with much frequency, and sometimes with much success. And there are some even among those who receive our doctrines, who are at a loss to place this subject in a satisfactory light, either to others or to themselves. When they read that "Unless a man were between heaven and hell, he would not have any thought, nor any will, still less any freedom of choice, for man is in possession of all these by virtue of the equilibrium between good and evil" (*H. H.* 546); and when they read that, "the Lord alone provides that there may be every-

where an equilibrium between good and evil, thus between heaven and hell, for on such equilibrium is founded the safety of all in the heavens and all on the earth" (*H. H.* 594) ; it seems as though the monstrous doctrine of predestination were revived in all its absurdity, and that Swedenborg had actually stultified himself by teaching an absolute necessity for the existence of a hell, and of consequence, a necessity for the damnation of a portion of the human race.

It simply shows to New Churchmen the duty of reading with care, and of placing one part with another to make a perfect whole. To seekers after truth, if they will but seek to the end, it will prove that in the New Church system, however shapeless, crude or absurd many of its views may appear at first blush and unexamined, when properly understood they will have no such appearance. They must be viewed from such a point of sight, that the seemingly discordant and meaningless materials, may be reflected upon each other by a concentration of their various shades and hues. Then, as from the beads and broken glass in a kaleidoscope there proceeds such order, so there will arise to the mind's eye a picture of truth in such beauty and harmony, as will astonish, beyond measure him who will but condescend to gaze into this kaleidoscope of heavenly verities.

The science of degrees is the key to all truth. The three degrees, the celestial, the spiritual, and the natural, find their origin in the Lord himself ; and the fact of God's being discretely a trine, begat the necessity that all creation should proceed from Him in trinal form. So the spirit of man, created in the image and likeness of its Maker was a trine. To accommodate a three-fold distinction which arose from man's free will in developing his interiors, heaven became a trine ; and as all its scenery, its mansions, gardens, waters, vegetation, anima-

tion were for man, and formed through him, they not only arranged themselves in trinal form in respect to each other, but each and all was a trine within itself. As earth exists through heaven and from it, being an exact correspondence of it in the most minute particulars—the one being, as it were, the soul of the other's body—earth from its greatest to its least parts, and all things earthly, in relation to each other and in themselves, are trinal ; and each whole and part, from the most gigantic to the least minute, is trinally arranged.

We have the privilege, therefore, to illustrate the trinal forms of heaven and of the mind, by those of earth ; for the latter are the correspondents and effects of the former. What is true of the one naturally, is true of the other spiritually. Each and all have that which is to them, a natural, a spiritual, and a celestial.

The natural degree is always the outmost or the lowest. It is the foundation or base of the others. It is what contains the others and holds them in consistency ; thus prevents them from being dissipated, and protects them from being destroyed by contact with outer forces too rough for their tender substances. The lowest heaven serves as the base upon which the superior heavens rest. It envelops and contains them, protecting their purer spheres from the rude contact of the world of spirits and the world of matter. The natural principle of the Lord is that by which He resides in the corrupt souls of men, interposing itself to shield his purer nature from the contaminating touch of fallen humanity, and preserving man himself from the destruction which would inevitably ensue, were any thing of his own to come in contact with the Divine Essence. The natural principle of man is that by which he has immediate communication with the natural world. It takes cognizance of all his affairs which relate to that world ; of all he knows of material sciences ; of all

worldly facts he treasures up ; of everything which tends directly to promote his interests real or seeming, his lusts, his pleasures or his happiness in that world. The possession of this natural is essential to the existence of his spiritual and celestial ; for it is the foundation upon which they rest, the envelope which contains them and holds them in consistency. All knowledges of spiritual and celestial things, which are to prepare the mortal's way to heaven are first received here, as spiritual food for the nourishment of the higher spiritual organism. It is just as necessary that spiritual food should first be received into the natural, and thence implanted in the memory, as that material food should first be received into the mouth, and thence passed to the stomach. The entire economy of the spiritual man would be as badly off without a natural degree, as the blood would be without vessels to contain it, or as the body would be without a skin.

The relation of the natural to its higher degrees may be further illustrated among material things, by the bark of a tree which protects the tender growing wood, while within this again is the sap or inmost life, comparatively speaking. When farmers wish to destroy a tree which is in the way, they girdle it, or strip off a circle of bark. The rough atmosphere decays the woody fibre, the sap is dried off and ceases to circulate, and the tree dies. So also with regard to fruit. Its celestial might be said to be the juice ; its spiritual, the pulp ; and its natural, the skin. Strip away the skin, and its juices would soon evaporate, its pulp dry up, and it would be fruit no more.

The principle upon which the natural becomes the continent and basis of its prior degrees is founded upon what is styled action and reaction. If a ball is thrown against a house, it is reacted against by the solid wall, which causes a rebound. A man standing upon the solid earth, maintains his position from the fact that the earth reacts

against his feet, while the force of gravitation is drawing him to its centre. So also the blood, in circulating through the veins, is held in its course by the walls of the vessel which ever react against the coursing fluid. The woody fibre of the tree reacts against the sap, and the bark against both. The skin of the apple reacts against the juice, and thus prevents it from being dissipated. Life is always action, and reaction is produced by the action of life. Reaction is never a living force in reality, but is only apparently so. The reaction of the ball is produced by its bound against the house. The reaction of the blood vessel, is produced from the living motion of the blood. The reaction of the skin of the apple, is the effect of the real action of the juice.

So it is that the reaction of the natural against the action of the celestial through the spiritual, is the manner in which the natural holds the inner degrees in consistency—is the basis upon which they rest, their protection from outward violence, and the only law which prevents them from becoming dissipated and being nothing. The natural thus preserves the celestial's identity, being the body of its soul.

Thus is produced the grand equilibrium by which nature in its entirety, and in its minutest particulars, is held together. For action and reaction produce a balancing force, which maintains each thing in just order. Were there more action than reaction, the blood would burst its barrier, the juice of the apple would burst its skin, and the soul and body being no longer in connection, ruin to their identity would result. Were there more reaction than action, the result would be the same. So the Lord by his laws of order, keeps his finger on the balance, and there is a harmony of these forces, producing that equilibrium which maintains the stars in their places in the sky, the earth within its own approved orbit, and all

its vegetation and animation in the just order designed by its Creator, to all eternity.

This is the equilibrium among natural things. Yet it is an illustration, just and true, of the same law in its application to spiritual things. The same balance of forces must be maintained in the spiritual world, the same in the mind of man, else destruction would ensue. Man's natural degree is the ground in which is implanted the seed containing spiritual life, which can only become a tree, branching forth to the heavens, in whose boughs the birds of the air shall build their nests, by the reaction which the living force within that seed produces in the ground against itself, causing the first tender blade to shoot forth. The life within ever active, and reacted against by the natural ground, still by this law of equilibrium of forces perfects itself, grows and strengthens; and as the tree rises to its highest heaven, the birds, which are the celestial affections, sing their joy over the glorious law of order, which gives them a foothold and a home.

But does this law create a necessity for evil? By no means. Swedenborg frequently speaks of it as the equilibrium between good and evil, simply because at this day the natural mind unfortunately is filled with evil. And in the Divine Providence of the Lord the perverted natural is provided to fulfill its mission as an equilibrating force, equally as the orderly natural. Had no such provision been made, there were an end of the grand scheme of salvation which had been projected. A natural earth all evil could no longer serve as a basis for the heavens. The natural mind all evil could no longer serve as a soil, in which heavenly seed being planted could bear heavenly fruit. That it *was* so ordered is what all who desire to rise may now rejoice over; since the poisonous soil of the natural mind, which all possess,

may still serve to react against the living force of the seeds of celestial life. And the dead leaves and flowers which fall from the tree thus produced, will mingle with the evil and false of accumulated centuries of hereditary delusion, and gradually renew the soil of the garden of the soul, until it shall finally become as good as the fruit of the tree which has arisen from it.

Whenever, therefore, we hear that the equilibrium of hell and of heaven is a necessity for the preservation of the universe, we must remember that hell, in all its degrees, exists in the natural mind; that now, since all that is natural is evil—that is to say, is more or less a hell—it still serves for equilibrium; thus giving occasion for the mournful doctrine, that our very salvation is now based upon the existence of hell. There is some relief in the thought that it was not always so. In olden times, the natural mind was in a state of order, and the same object was attained in a manner much more conformable to the Lord's love; and—may we not believe it?—so it shall be again.

Swedenborg says that, "reaction appears as if it belonged to the created being, because it exists when the being is acted upon; thus, in man, it appears as if it were his own, because he does not perceive any otherwise than that life is his own, when, nevertheless, man is only a recipient of life. From this cause it is that man, from his own hereditary evil, reacts against God; but, so far as he believes that all his life is from God, and every good of life from the action of God, and every evil of life from the reaction of man, reaction becomes correspondent with action, and man acts with God as from himself. The equilibrium of all things is from action and joint reaction, and everything must be in equilibrium. These things are said in order that no man may believe that he ascends to God from himself, but from the Lord." (*D. L. W.* 68.)

The equilibrium is, therefore, still preserved, whether the world is in order or in disorder. Hell itself is forced to bend to the overruling Providence, which foresees and provides for a final restoration of the reign of Love. Hell itself must even become an instrument of good. There is no necessity here for a suspicion that hell is necessary to the existence of good. For the reaction may correspond with the action, or it may be in opposition to it. In either case the balance is preserved.

Reaction in correspondence, we are led to hope, is to be the condition of the future. What though the hell of to-day be still a reality to those within whom it now exists! Bound hand and foot, the Evil One shall lose his power over the regenerate of the coming ages. In the dungeon he has formed for himself, in chains he cannot break—and they are those of his own forging—he shall at that day be supine for all time to come. From the natural mind shall arise a garden of beauty, the Eden of the past, restored in all its loveliness and innocence, within whose borders the Serpent shall trail his uncouth form never more. The equilibrium necessary to the freedom of man shall still be there; the *power* of reacting in opposition to the living force of the Divine Will shall still be there; but the *choice* shall be to react in correspondence with the action of true Life. The man of this day is in possession of freedom by being placed between the hell which exists in his natural mind, and the heaven which is ever pressing upon him for reception. The man of that day shall exercise his freedom, by his position between that which is a hell in itself, considered separately and alone, and, as if uninfluenced by any influx from God, and that influx itself. By itself, and so far as it is *his own*, his natural will be evil; but in that it has yielded itself entirely and unreservedly, and by its own freedom, to the Lord, it is good. In so far, if it were possible, as

it can be separated in idea from its entire harmony with the action of the celestial, it is evil ; but in so far as its reaction is in entire correspondence therewith, and that voluntarily, it is good.

Therefore, there is still action and reaction—still there is equilibrium—still man lives in entire freedom. Between the evil that he might be and the good that he is, he is held in the balance. Still he stands, poised as now between himself and God ; the one in itself all evil, and the other in itself all good. And yet, in that he has yielded himself in total harmony to the Divine Action, both are good. So, in one sense, his equilibrium may be said to be still maintained by his position between good and evil ; but it is evil in possibility rather than in actuality.

It is then for man to recognize that all the good he has is from the action of God ; he will, in such case, soon cease to have any evil to lament. Then the natural mind may yield in harmony to every impulse emanating from the Sun of heaven, evil may be known no more, and hell, to the regenerated man of ages hence, be but a shadowy tradition of the past ; still shall the universe of nature be balanced in all its harmony, and the heaven of the future be as firm on its basis, as safe from harm, enveloped in its natural tegument, as nicely poised in the providence of God, as though earth were still a nursery for the dark regions of the lost.

“It is the good of faith which constitutes the Church ; that is, a real life of love and charity, according to those things which faith teaches. Doctrinals are for the sake of life ; this every one may know, for what are doctrinals but for some end ? And what is the end but life, that a man may become such as doctrinals teach him to be.”—*Swedenborg*.

CHILDHOOD.

BY W. H. HOLCOMBE.

O scenes of my Childhood ! Ye cannot restore me
The light and the glow of my life's early dawn ;
The gardens, the meadows, the hills are before me,
But something which gave them their glory, is gone.

The roses are blooming by zephyr still haunted,
And evening all dreamily sits by the stream ;
But ah ! not the rose, my sweet mother planted,
And ah ! not the evening when love was the dream !

Like skies in the depth of a bright lake inverted,
Heaven lies in the heart of our childhood serene ;
But dark as that water by sun-light deserted
Is the spirit, where Time with its shadow hath been.

The best of the Angels who love us and guide us,
Attend upon childhood and gladden its way ;
But subtly the Demons of evil divide us,
And lead the young flock from the shepherds astray.

Though far from their care and in spite of their warning—
We wander away on a sorrowful track,
Those Angels of youth on the hills of the morning,
Stand star-like in glory and beckon us back.

Their eyes still pursue us with radiant affection,
They sigh that our life from their own is withdrawn,
We feel their regrets, and with fond recollection,
We sigh in return that our Childhood has gone.

NATURE AND PLAN OF REDEMPTION.

(Continued from page 26.)

In what has been said, I think it has been shown, that there is no ground for the assertion that God cannot pardon a sinner without dishonoring his law ; because there is no difficulty in the Divine mind ; because his Word was never pledged to punish the sinner irrespective of the state of his will and affections—that which has been received as the denouncing of a judicial penalty, being, simply, the statement of the consequences of transgression—death ; because the scheme of redemption does not meet the difficulty asserted to exist, neither fulfilling the law, nor executing the penalty ; and lastly, because pardon through a vicarious atonement, presents no barriers to sin which do not exist without it.

If so, then your explanation of the life and death of the Lord, fails to show the necessity for so stupendous a work as we all admit the Incarnation to be. There must be another, a truer, and more philosophical reason for this “central fact of the universe.”

I have as yet only touched incidentally upon that proposition of the creed, which defines the nature of this work ; and in stating our views on this point, I shall endeavor to answer that question of solemn import, “What think ye of Christ?”

For what then, did our Lord come into the world ? Wherein lay the necessity that the Creator of all things should descend to our sinful world, take upon Him our nature, pass through the various states of human life, assaulted by Satan, and tempted as never man was tempted, and after a life of suffering and humiliation, yield up his life upon the cross ? Was it to show to man how highly

God esteemed his law, or to give answer to the cavils of an ungodly world, against the Divine love and mercy ?

There is an explanation more worthy the character of the event, and of the Divine wisdom.

Equally, with yourselves, we hold that it was necessary to the salvation of man ; and that without the work of Redemption, no human being could have been saved.

This necessity, however, did not arise from any difficulty in the Divine mind, any unwillingness on the part of God to save, nor from any difficulty inherent in the law, by which the exercise of mercy was impossible. The question was, not how can God pardon the penitent ? but how can the sinner be brought into that state of penitence, in which pardon would be possible, because desired and accepted ?

He who was created to love God supremely, and his neighbor as himself, had turned from God, and loved himself alone. The knowledge he once had of God and a spiritual world, was lost. Placed by creation above the brutes, because gifted with liberty and rationality, he had abused these gifts ; and taking advantage of his eminent position, he had done that which was impossible to them ; he had violated all the laws of his being ; turned life to death ; till at last, the only thing left to distinguish him from the brutes, was the capacity for spiritual life, the faculty of being man.

How could a being thus sunken in sensuality, a lover of self only, and hating every one else, except so far as they could in some way minister to his self-love or pride, —how could such a being be transformed into the man, whose heart, full of the love of all that is holy and good, long for communion with his God ? How can he even be brought to see, mentally, the heaven he has lost ? How to understand, that all his present pleasures and joys, are really infernal ?

Despite the revelation of God's Word, the warning voice of prophets, despite signs and miracles and terrible judgments, even that people favored above all others, made the repository of God's Word, had wandered farther and farther from Him, had sunk lower and lower into mere formalism ; and burying the Word under human traditions, had made the very ordinances of religion a mere outward show of sanctity, mere fuel to the fire of their pride.

It was at this time, at the lowest ebb of the human race, when all means had failed to save man from his downward course, when there was no other resource by which Divine mercy could preserve man from disconnection with heaven, and consequently from utter destruction and extinction, that God became incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ, thus answering the question of how man could be saved. Not how he could be pardoned and restored, but how the Divine influences could be so veiled as to approach without consuming the fallen creature.

It was a serious fact, that sin had so gained the mastery in the human soul, that his freedom was well nigh lost ; had so filled the spiritual world with its baneful influences, that hell had commenced its assaults even on the material world ; and even the very bodies of men were no more safe from the assaults of evil spirits, by whom they had begun to be obsessed.

Then it was, "when there was no eye to pity, and no arm to save, that His eye pitied, and His arm brought salvation,"—that God clothed himself in human flesh, took on Him our nature, suffered all the assaults of hell, and was victorious over it, so that He exclaimed, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven.

It was through the medium of this humanity assumed, that this work was possible to the Divine, who otherwise could not approach to, or act upon man in this fallen and

sensual state. It was thus that he reduced the hells and the spiritual world to order, delivered man from infestation, removed from him those evil influences which had accumulated in the spiritual world, and restored him to that spiritual equilibrium in which his freedom consists, and placed him where he could be reached by the Divine mercy. It was of this that Isaiah sang, where he speaks of the conflict of the Lord with our spiritual foes. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozra? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?" (Chap. 63, verses 1-9.)

This was the work of Redemption. It was not the removal of any legal or judicial difficulty in the way of the sinner's pardon and reconciliation to God, but the removal of difficulties arising solely from man's fallen condition, which, by the very depth of the fall, had carried him beyond the reach of any previous means used by Divine mercy.

There was in the very nature of things, an absolute necessity for a Divine deliverer. There was a work to be done, a salvation to be accomplished, possible to nothing but the Divine.

But what are pardon and salvation, and what are the required conditions of their attainment by the sinner?

The condition of the sinner is briefly this: Adam by sin fell, thus bequeathing to his posterity a sinful and perverted nature, an inherent inclination to go wrong. He stood in Eden, our natural and spiritual progenitor, in so far that he transmitted the proclivities of his nature to his descendants and he was our representative in no other sense. Nor are we responsible for his sin, or for evil inclinations inherited, except so far as we of ourselves assent. Neither does his sin affect our salvation in any other way than this, that, by his transgression first, and afterwards from generation to generation, in its on-

ward course, the stream of inheritance was, by the accumulated transgressions of ages, more and more perverted ; till at length the beams of the Sun of Righteousness falling on man's heart, were utterly perverted, and instead of bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, there sprang up only the deadly harvest of self-love, pride and worldliness.

Thus man's face was averted from his Maker. He walked no longer with his face towards heaven, but looked only on sensual and worldly things. From being a type of heaven, he had become an image of hell. Separated from heaven and heavenly influences, he had drawn more closely the bonds which connected him with the infernal world. To be rescued, his will must be renewed, and his affections totally changed. Utterly as these were perverted, there was still left his rationality, clouded indeed by sin, yet leaving, as it were, one door of entrance for Divine Truth to the soul.

Then it was that God became incarnate ; clothing Himself in humanity, He conquered our spiritual foes, freed man from the infernal influences which had well nigh destroyed his liberty, and thus placed him in such a position that he could be reached. The Comforter was sent. The Spirit descended to his heart, clothed in the Divine Humanity with new power, "convincing the world of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment to come."

This was the complete work of redemption, performed by infinite love for man. His foes conquered, order was restored to the universe. The Humanity assumed was by the indwelling Divinity glorified ; that is, the humanity which He assumed from the mother, was put off by degrees, till by that last and greatest temptation, the passion of the cross, He became a Divine Man ; and it is alone, through this Divine Humanity, which was Divine truth manifested, that we have any access to the Father—the

COULDER LOVE.

The Humanity alone opened an avenue by which temptation could assault the Divinity. By means of these temptations successively overcome, his glorification was accomplished. The regeneration of every soul is, as it were, a type of this infinite work ; and as through temptations, one by one, we reject the desires and loves of the natural man, the Lord fills us with heavenly love and wisdom.

This was Redemption. It was no technical satisfaction to legal enactments, no accumulation of righteousness to be imputed to the sinner ; but, clothed in humanity, the Son of God overcame our foes ; explored, by experience, the deepest wants of man's being ; opened new channels to man's heart for Divine influences, by which truth Divine could gain entrance to that human citadel, which Omnipotence could have crushed or annihilated, but to which it was his merciful purpose to gain a free and willing entrance.

The infinite mercy and condescension of God, manifested in Redemption, was made necessary only by that utter degradation of man which had placed him beyond the reach of all previous means used by Divine mercy ; and made, without this interposition, his eternal death a necessary consequence of his willful sin.

The question to be solved, in view of a lost world, was, How can man be made willing to receive pardon and life ? How can his enmity to God and all goodness be removed ? How can he be made once more a willing recipient of Divine favor, willing to live a life of holiness, humbly acknowledging that he was but a recipient from the infinite Source of Life and Light ?

There was no technical pardon necessary, but the consciousness of a heart at enmity with God was to be replaced by a conscious reconciliation. His spiritual state must be so changed, that his heart should beat in unison with heaven. This is a state of salvation.

We agree generally as to the fallen state of man, and as to what constitutes a state of salvation, but we differ totally as to the means by which the latter is effected. You hold that salvation was not possible, because of the requirements of God's law, and because God's Word was pledged to the punishment of transgression. I hold that by the fall man had passed beyond the reach of any existing means of salvation, being, by his wickedness, unapproachable by the Divine influences. You hold that he could have been saved without redemption, could God have pardoned him. Redemption removed an obstacle which existed in the Divine mind from the requirements of law. I hold that the obstacle was solely in the state of the sinner, and that God could have pardoned him without redemption, had any other means been adequate to his exigency. You say, Christ came to satisfy the law's demands. I, that he came to provide means by which God could reach the fallen creature, to overcome the powers of darkness and restore to man his spiritual freedom. You hold that by faith in the vicarious suffering of Christ, man is brought into a salvable state. I hold that by repentance and reformation, by shunning evils as sins against God, and by co-operating with God, man is transformed, by the Divine power, from a child of Satan to a child of God; that, by the use of that power continually given of God, man is saved.

Do we then deny the dogma of salvation by faith alone? We do; for faith without charity or love, is the mere intellectual possession of truth, a thing possible to devils as well as angels. In this matter you do and must depart from your creed, for you believe, as the Apostle says, that with all knowledge a man may yet be as sounding brass. Faith is not, then, the sole "*sine qua non*" of salvation. Other preparation is needed; that is, charity, which shall give life and vitality to faith.

This you virtually confess, by the phrase so frequently used, "saving faith."

Charity is greater than faith, because there may be such a state of the will and affections, as would place one in a salvable state, who may never have heard of Redemption. He might never know this truth till his eyes were opened in the world to come, but charity, if not acquired here, can never be found there.

You do not more entirely disclaim and disbelieve in merit, as a ground of salvation, than I do. Sinners, who are debtors for all things, may well abstain from putting forward any claims for merit. Salvation—since no angel even possesses any good inherent in himself, none which he has not received from its only Source—is entirely of the Divine mercy. None of us have anything which we have not received, and this becomes more and more evident as the Christian advances in the Divine life. All idea of reward and merit is forgotten, for the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory are the Lord's alone.

Salvation by faith is not the pardon of a sinner resulting from any intellectual assent to the work of Atonement, and of Christ as a mediator; but it comes from and by that faith which is born of Love, which accepts Christ as the mediator between God and man; and this acceptance involves the entire change of the acceptor, and his ultimate regeneration. A soul filled with the love of self and the world cannot accept Christ, but henceforth the whole end and aim of its being is changed. Christ becomes the great exemplar, into whose image he is to be transformed, and whose love is to fill his soul, to the exclusion and subordination of all other loves.

The mind may experience any amount of intellectual activity, or assent to this or any other form of doctrine; but mere intellect is never operative. Of itself, it can never bring about this great change in the soul—this

transformation from a state of spiritual death to one of spiritual life. Strictly speaking, faith is mere knowledge, which, of itself, is never a ground of action ; but where the will is inclined and intends action, there knowledge points out the way and the means to the desired end. Faith is no test of character apart from the life, but the quality of the will and affections are what determine it ; and, such as the will is, such is the faith.

If, then, the question is asked, How is a man saved ? my answer is, By looking to the Lord, by ceasing to do evil and learning to do well ; thus working out his own salvation, yet knowing that it is God that worketh in him.

Thus, to sum up in a few words : We hold the work of Redemption to have been a two-fold work. It consisted in the union of the Divine and human natures, thus uniting man to God ; and it consisted, also, in the restoration of order to the spiritual world, by which man was freed from the infestations of evil spirits, and preserved in spiritual freedom. Without these two things no one could be saved ; in the first place, because he had fallen beyond the reach of the Divine influences ; and secondly, because such was his condition by reason of his connection with evil spirits, so frequently alluded to in the Gospels, and such the power acquired over him, that, until the Satanic crew was driven away and removed from him, he could not be rescued.

But with you, the whole work of Redemption was a merely technical satisfaction rendered to the demands of an arbitrary law. To us, it was a wonderful work of Divine Love, absolutely necessary from the nature of things—wonderful, because of the infinite love and pity shown to our fallen race, and because it was a labor possible to the Divine alone.

If, now, I have succeeded in stating intelligibly the dif-

ference between our views of these leading doctrines, I would fain hope, that your unbiased judgment will concede, that these views, which I have stated as my own, and which are drawn entirely from the works of Emanuel Swedenborg, are far more rational than those of the prevailing theology ; because they furnish an explanation of that "central fact of the universe," grounded not in words, but in the very nature of things. At any rate, I will hope that some one may be led to investigate in his writings, more fully, these truths which I have been able to state but in the briefest manner.

Before closing, I wish to state some further points, in which I consider the ground, from which you are accustomed to view these things, defective. The great difficulty in the way of proper investigation is, the utter ignorance which prevails with regard to the spiritual world, and the laws which govern it. Beyond the bare fact that there is such a world, and that one day we shall live there forever, the world is in utter ignorance. Nay, more—it is considered somewhat profane to attempt to pry into things not revealed in the Word of God. All idea of our state there is darkness—whether as men or phantoms, whether with or without bodies, no one knows. Necessary ignorance is excusable ; but what if such ignorance be not necessary ? A slight knowledge of these things will show us that God's relation to man is something more than of a merely forensic nature, and that a sinner is not pardoned by a word, or saved by a Divine fiat.

In nature we see causes and effects in their various relations ; but they exist no less in the spiritual world of mind, though invisible to these eyes of flesh. If the body be sick, you seek the necessary means for a cure. But what is the material body, so wonderful, so intricate, yet so wisely adapted to its end ? The mere material

covering of the soul—in itself a dead, inert organ, given us only as a means of communication with the material world, which leaving at death, we enter the spiritual world, a spiritual being, clothed in a spiritual body. If this be not so, what is man after death? The ordinarily received system makes the world to come, (at least, until the resurrection shall unite soul and body,) a thing so near to nothing, that an idea of it is impossible.

We all admit that there is a spiritual world. It must be, then, a world of pure thought and affection. These are its material. But these things are nothing, except they be in a form. We are all possessed of a spiritual organism, infinitely more perfect than these natural forms; and the law by which not only the spiritual body, but the spiritual world exists, (and here I refer to the external world of earths, rivers, mountains, and valleys, and animated nature, amid which angels and spirits dwell—for all these exist in the world to come, and to the senses of the angels, with a vivid reality unknown to our grosser perceptions,) is simply this:—The bodies of the angels, and the scenery by which they are surrounded, are the outbirths of their internal states, and vary with their states. The angels know this. They know that these things, as well as times and spaces, are only appearances, grounded in spiritual states. In every circumstance or change in these things, they read the changes of their own states. In all these things, they read lessons of heavenly wisdom, because they perfectly understand the laws which govern these changes, and the spiritual significance of each circumstance.

Neither do their minds, like ours, rest in the external delights which surround them, but in the heavenly truths therein conveyed.

Consider the relation of these laws to the states of the righteous and wicked.

What must heaven be? A world which corresponds to, and represents, the internal states of the holy and sanctified children of God. How unlike this world, which truly corresponds to and represents the mixed state of good and evil, and, we might say, the great preponderance of the latter.

And what must hell be? A world, the correspondence of unmixed evil, selfishness and sin. These are the laws which, to each one of us, will inevitably bring happiness or misery.

The fact, that, but for the indwelling of the spiritual body in this material one, it would be as dead as any other clod of the valley, seems almost forgotten. The truth is, there is a spiritual body—an organism as superior to these material ones as spirit is to matter; and every difference in character is from the difference in spiritual forms.

Many half believe the soul to be the effect of the body; whereas the truth is, the soul is the germ round which, and according to which, the material form gathers particle by particle. Angels and devils are spiritual forms, but as diverse as men and monsters.

If any one deems the change in the spiritual being, which makes an angel out of a wicked man, a thing that can be accomplished by a word, and the work of a moment, it is a serious and very unphilosophical error.

From infancy to old age, as man grows in body, so the soul and the spiritual man is growing. There is a perfect correspondence between the material and spiritual. The body thrives on its food, and the soul also. Each cherished love and truth forms its food, and is incorporated into its being. Strictly speaking, love is the essence of life, wisdom its form; and man is really and in fact a form of love.

It is possible these statements may sound strangely to

one whose ideas of even the spiritual world are material, and who can hardly divest himself of the idea that the body is the man. But we speak of a spiritual state ; and what but love and wisdom can form such a state ? Of what else could it be made ? Nay, what else is there that can be called real ?

All our lives long, we are thus growing, either into a heavenly or an infernal form. There is no act but leaves its trace, and helps either to make or mar that which was created into the form and image of God. These sinful affections are part of our very being. Each moment of their indulgence but fastens them more securely, inwrought into our very being, because they bring the spiritual organism more and more into their very form. Thus viewed, life is a serious thing. Can an act of penitence unmake what is the growth of years ? No more than penitence can restore the drunkard to the vigor and freshness of youth.

The spiritual world is not subject to the laws of time and space. For although these things appear there, and are absolutely necessary to an external world, yet the angels know that they are mere appearances, precisely the same as the world in which they dwell. It is a world which, to their senses, appears far more real than does this world to us ; and yet it is entirely the outbirth of the internal state of the angels, and dependent on their state, and in all its scenery varies with their state. Heaven and hell are really states, not places ; there is the appearance of it, resulting, as I have said, from the aggregate states of the inhabitants. Each soul is an image of its home. His place is the result of his internal condition. The regeneration of a soul is really its reorganization, and its transfer from infernal to heavenly associations ; for in this life, though we are unconscious of it, we are associated with heavenly or infernal societies, according to our state.

Man is a two-fold being, having a material body, by which he acts in this world, and also a soul, which is the man himself. This is the real man, and none the less so that now it is clothed in flesh ; nor does this material circumstance at all render the spiritual man, even now, subject to time or space ; and he is now, therefore, associated with his kindred spirits, in heaven or hell, whose dwelling is not fixed by longitude, or lands, or seas, but by state. It is a serious thought, that, even now, we are associated with those who shall be hereafter our companions and associates in the life to come. No arbitrary fiat, on his entrance to another life, sends man here or there. The death of the body lost the man no freedom, and, awaking there, he is free to choose his friends and home. Even here, the indulgence of evil passions draws about us those spirits whose home is amid such things, and who find their delight in such states. Resistance to these evils drives them away, and angelic spirits minister to the assaulted soul.

Generally, a good and evil man are regarded as differing only in their desires and affections, and consequently in their practices. The truth is, they are alike only in this—that both externally are men. Viewed interiorly, they are utterly unlike ; for the one is a form of heaven, and the other of hell. Could our eyes pierce through the veil of flesh into the spiritual world, we should now behold them surrounded by companions as different.

True, in this life, no orderly conscious intercourse exists between us and the spiritual world ; yet we are really and effectually conjoined, according to the spiritual affinities of our various affections.

How comparatively insignificant are even the stupendous laws of the material universe, compared with those which hold in order this home of the myriads of beings,

who have passed into it from all the centuries of all the worlds! The human mind can grasp but the faintest idea of that Power which sustains, inviolate, the Divine laws of order.

These truths, but imperfectly and briefly stated, will show that the regeneration of the soul involves the entire change of the spiritual being and form, a total change of spiritual sympathies, (for by nature we are only evil,) a transfer from hell and its evil spirits to heaven and the society of angels. Can this be done by a word or command? If it could, no one would ever be lost; for God is infinite love. Heaven's gates are invisible to an evil soul. Only when our hearts are pure, when the kingdom of God is within us, can we enter into that state which is heaven.

Swedenborg claims that his spiritual sight was opened, that he might reveal to us the laws of the spiritual world and the state of departed spirits. He asserts that, in the year 1757, the last judgment took place in the spiritual world, meaning by that the state intermediate between heaven and hell, into which all enter after death, previous to the final award; that, as a consequence, the evil influences which had accumulated there were dispersed; for, previously, multitudes of souls were congregated there, imbued with falses of all kinds, who were at this time dispersed and sent to their final abode. He asserts, as a consequence, that the Divine influx would thereafter reach man unperverted, for such influx comes to us for the most part through that world. Writing at that time, he said it would result in an increase of knowledge, and the more rapid elevation of man both in scientific and religious things.

Nearly a century has passed, and, I ask if its evidence is not greatly in his favor? Chiefly, however, he was raised up by the Lord as an instrument to unfold the

spiritual sense of the Word. It was this spiritual sense that was signified by His Second Coming. He was to come in power and great glory and in the clouds of heaven, which phrase always signifies the literal sense of the Word. For the literal sense is a cloud obscuring those higher truths, that spiritual sense signified by power and great glory, which hitherto men could not receive, but which are now revealed as truths necessary to the higher state of the Church, which has already commenced.

If these things be true, we are living in a New Era and in a New Dispensation. If it be true, He has come silently, as a thief in the night, yet not more so than He came at first. The Jews were entirely mistaken in their ideas of what His coming was to be ; may not the present Christian Church be so also ? “ Watch, therefore, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.”

Of you, brethren, I have only to ask that these claims may not be passed by without a candid examination. Examine with an unprejudiced mind ; not as some have done, only to criticise, but to learn the truth ; then believe only what you see to be true.

From my own experience I assure you that you will gain, by the light of these truths, a power of self-inspection, of which you now have no idea. A light will break upon your path, like the noonday sun, making the way of regeneration plain. You will walk no longer ignorant of your spiritual foes, or of your duty to God or to men.

PROF. HUNTINGTON'S DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

Dean Trench, in a sermon published a few years since, justly remarks, “ that all the controversies of our time, whatever questions are stirring at any depth the minds

and spirits of men, concentrate themselves more and more around the person of Christ. 'What think ye of Christ?' is more and more *the* question, which, according as we answer, we shall answer every other question; for it rules and determines the answers to all." Especially does a New Churchman, watching the driftings and eddyings of the theology of the day, direct his attention to the answers which this central question receives at the hands of the more prominent religious teachers among us, and note with interest the progress made toward the true one, in these various quarters. Among others, Professor Huntington of Cambridge has lately enlisted our sympathies most particularly in this respect. An officer of a Unitarian University, who avowed his belief in the Divinity of the Lord in any sense, was so rare a spectacle, that we have been curious to see how he would maintain his position, and how he would be affected by the uncongenial atmosphere about him. We felt that he must move in some direction. Standing still in such circumstances is impossible. He must either give up the little truth he has, or else get more to defend it.

Some three years ago, Professor Huntington published a volume of sermons, one of which, "On the Divinity of Christ," takes as high ground as to the real Godhead of the Lord as we have ever seen assumed, except by professed New Churchmen. The argument in support of his position was, however, rather textual than philosophical, resting firmly upon the words of our Lord Himself, but making no attempt to reconcile it with the apparently conflicting statements of the Gospels, or to explain it to philosophical apprehension. In his more recent publication, "Christian Believing and Living," he has essayed something of this sort, and, in a Sermon on the Trinity tries to give his views of the personality and mutual relations of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and the reasons

which should commend these views to the faith of the Christian.

We have perused this particular sermon with great care, and have no hesitation in saying that Professor Huntington has by no means yet reached firm ground in his theological explorations. His present doctrine of the Trinity is a confusion worse confounded than the Athanasian Creed. He teaches not merely the old-fashioned orthodox *Trinity* of Coequal Divine Persons, but adds a fourth, making a *Quaternity*; or, at least, such seems to be the meaning of the following passages:

"In the transcendent, removed, and awful depth of His absolute Infinitude, which no understanding can pierce, the Everlasting and Almighty God lives in an existence of which our only possible knowledge is gained by lights thrown back from revelation. *Out of that ineffable and veiled Godhead*—the *ground-work*, if we may say so, of all Divine manifestation or theophany, there emerge to us in revelation *the three* whom we rightly call persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, with their several individual offices, mutual relations, operations toward men, and perfect unity together." (p. 362.)

"But the Son, in his character of Sonship, is retaken, so to speak, into the everlasting *Almighty Ineffable undivided One*, where the distinction of offices which had aided us so greatly in apprehending the glorious Trinity, are lost to sight. It is not anything peculiar to one of the *Three Persons*, but *God*, in whom they all are One, who there is 'all in all.'" (p. 36.)

"It has been justly observed that the strictly evangelical origin of the term 'Father,' or its application simultaneously with the appearance of Christ in immediate connection with the new economy of the Incarnation, is itself a suggestion of the Tri-une belief as implying that not all of God is expressed till the 'Son,' also the necessary correlative of 'Father,' is known; and, thinking patiently a little further, we shall see that human language could not so well represent these infinite realities as by using the same term 'Father,' *sometimes for the absolute Godhead*, and *sometimes for that relative paternal Person in the Godhead*, brought to view only when the Son and Spirit appear." (pp. 371-2.)

Now, if this is not teaching a fourth, or rather, a first, person in the Godhead, never yet thought of before by theologians, we greatly misapprehend the meaning of words. We do not know whether Professor Huntington is ambitious of founding a new Theology, or whether this teaching of his is simply the result of an attempt to do what never yet has been done, explain how One is Three, and Three One, in the same sense and at the same time. Heretofore it has usually been said, that the Three together made up the whole Godhead; but, according to Professor Huntington, the Three only make, together, the *manifestation* of the Godhead, leaving the Absolute God still in the background, or "groundwork."

For our readers it is, of course, unnecessary to refute this new heresy. Professor Huntington brings no argument to support it, with which we are not all familiar. Some of those adduced by him are even threadbare in their often-exposed absurdity. For example, in answer to the very natural objection, that his doctrine is contrary to sound sense, he says :

"When we have told ourselves how the tree that shades us gets out of the seed blown from our finger's end, or when we have explained how one person influences another without sight or touch, we may, perhaps, be emboldened to make our comprehension the criterion of the verities of God." (p. 376.)

It is evident that this retort can only have its force in the case of such doctrines as are distinctly asserted by God beyond all peradventure. But on the subject of the Trinity the very dispute is, *whether* this doctrine has been so distinctly revealed? Professor Huntington himself admits that the words "Trinity" and "Person" are not found in the Bible. Jesus nowhere claims to be Jehovah, or God Himself, and the Holy Spirit nowhere speaks or is spoken to. Indeed, it is said that "the Holy Spirit *was not yet*," before the glorification of Jesus. We won-

der Professor Huntington did not bring forward that other equally trite illustration, the scepticism of the Indian Prince who refused to believe that water could become solid, *having never seen any ice*. The Indian Prince showed great good sense in our opinion, and would have been guilty of gross credulity in accepting the fact merely on a story-teller's authority. If he had refused to believe, after seeing water frozen before his eyes, he might *then* have been condemned as an obstinate sceptic, with justice. This, however, is not the case with those who disbelieve the old doctrine of the Trinity. They say they do not find it in the Bible, and until it can be shown to them there, they cannot be accused of unreasonable doubting.

Another strong point of Professor Huntington's is the *consensus* of all Christians and Divines on the subject, from the early ages. He gives several pages of quotations from orthodox writers, but most conveniently forgets to cite all those who have entertained different views. Besides, if this sort of testimony is good for anything at the present day, what unheard-of enormities could thus be supported!—Transubstantiation, Justification by Faith alone without good works, Persecution of heretics, the Resurrection of the material body, the conflagration of the world, and numerous other similar dogmas which will readily suggest themselves.

Professor Huntington claims, too, that this doctrine of the Trinity affords a common ground on which Pantheists, Humanitarians, and Naturalists, can unite. As near as we can make him out, he thinks that it combines the views of these different classes, so that they can all find in it their own peculiar ideas. We should think that this was anything but a merit. A true view of God is not to be obtained by patching together various and contradictory opinions, and saying that they are all true. We cannot receive truth clearly till we have rejected error.

If the Father is to be worshipped as God, no one else must be worshipped, for God cannot accept a divided homage. If the Lord Jesus Christ is the true object of worship, then it is wrong to approach the Father as a distinct person. If the Holy Ghost is to be adored as the Creator and Ruler of all things, we must do it without reservation. Professor Huntington is silent on the subject of such difficulties as these.

But as we said at the outset, our chief interest in this sermon was to discover what was its teachings respecting the Lord. From what we explained above, it is quite evident that we were disappointed of finding in it true and rational views on this point. It is impossible to say what Prof. Huntington thinks of Christ ; he clearly does not consider him the sole and supreme object of worship ; he equally repudiates His mere humanity ; he speaks of His mission on earth, as the effecting of an "atonement for sin or the reconciliation between God and man" (p. 386) ; but omits to explain clearly, how this work was accomplished, although he uses the orthodox terms in respect to it, "satisfaction," "sacrifice," "pardon," &c. The whole effect of the sermon is perplexing and unsatisfactory in the highest degree, though on the whole it exhibits a leaning toward the errors of the church consummated at the Lord's second coming. We shall watch his future progress on these points, however, not without hope that more light may dawn upon him, and that he may yet be found among those who find in the Lord Jesus Christ "the fulness of the Godhead bodily." T. H.

"They who have confirmed themselves in this tenet, that the understanding in matters of a theological nature is to see nothing, but that people are blindly to believe what the church teaches, cannot see any truth in the light, for they have obstructed the passage of the light into themselves."
—*Swedenborg*.

BE YE PATIENT.

BESIDE the toilsome way,
Lowly and sad by fruits and flowers unblest,
Which my worn feet tread sadly, day by day,
Longing in vain for rest,

An angel softly walks,
With pale, sweet face, and eyes cast meekly down ;
The while, from withered leaves and flowerless stalks,
She weaves my fitting crown.

A sweet and patient grace,
A look of firm endurance, true and tried,
Of suffering meekly borne, rests on her face,
So pure—so glorified.

And when my fainting heart
Desponds and murmurs at its adverse fate,
Then quietly the angel's bright lips part,
Murmuring softly—"Wait."

"Patience," she sweetly saith,
"The Father's mercies never come too late :
Gird thee with patient strength and trusting faith,
And firm endurance—wait!"

Angel ! behold—I wait—
Wearing the thorny crown through all life's hours,—
Wait till thy hand shall ope the eternal gate,
And change the thorns to flowers.

"If any one acknowledge for a doctrinal that charity is grounded in faith, and he liveth in charity towards his neighbor, in this case he is not indeed in the truth *as to doctrine*, but still he is in the truth *as to life* ; consequently there is in him the Lord's church or kingdom."—*Swedenborg*
A. C. 3451.

IS THE CONVENTION A CHURCH ?

BY REV. O. P. HILLER.

In the *New Jerusalem Messenger* of August 13th and 20th, there is an article with the above caption, containing, as I conceive, fallacies, which, if not detected, may lead some minds astray, and do harm to the cause of truth. I have waited to see a reply ; but none having appeared, (at least none to my knowledge,) I feel impelled to answer the question myself. In justice, the reply should appear in the *Messenger* ; but as I have learned, from one or two trials, that the columns of that paper are not always open to the statement of opinions differing from those of the editors, I am constrained to ask the privilege of replying through the columns of your excellent Magazine.

The writer of the article above referred to, says near the commencement of his remarks, " The term *church* has many significations, according to the connection in which it is used. Love and wisdom, or goodness and truth, constitute the church interiorly ; or, as Swedenborg says, (*Heavenly Doctrines*, 241,) ' That which constitutes heaven with man, also constitutes the church ; for as love and faith constitute heaven, so also love and faith constitute the church.' But there is also an *external church* ; and we are taught that a single person who is receptive of this love and faith, is a church in the least form ; that a collection or society of such persons is a church, or *the church*, in a larger form. This being the case, I do not very well see how we can avoid the conclusion that an assemblage of societies, or an association, is a Church in a larger form ; and a convention, or still larger assembly, is a Church in a still larger form." Now, in this

passage, which reads so smoothly, and to appearance so connectedly, there are two great fallacies, which the cursory reader might not observe, and which, perhaps, the writer himself (for he seems to write with sincerity) did not perceive. But I shall endeavor to exhibit them.

1. In the first place, the writer says, "We are taught that a single person who is receptive of this love and faith, is a church in the least form." By the words "we are taught," I presume he means "taught by Swedenborg." I rather doubt whether Swedenborg uses just such language as this—that "a single person who is receptive," &c. ; it is too external a way of speaking for his style. But let it pass ; it is true enough as an abstract principle. But only in the abstract is it true. You cannot put your finger upon any individual, and say, "This person is a church in the least form." You may think so, but you do not *know* so ; that would be to judge him, and we are distinctly taught that no man is to pronounce on another's interior state, whether for good or for evil. This the Lord alone knows. Of one thing we are certain, that no individual on the earth is fully and wholly a church in the least form ; for to say that, would be to say that he is fully and wholly receptive of love and faith, or, in other words, fully regenerate, which no man is while in this world. Every one while here, has evils and falses still to contend against ; and so far, he is not "a church in its least form."

But the writer proceeds : "[We are taught] that a collection or society of such persons, is a church, or *the* church, in a larger form." Stop there ! I doubt whether any such sentence is to be found in Swedenborg. The writer has in his mind what Swedenborg says about heaven, not about the church. "An angel," he says, "is a heaven in the least form, and a society of angels is a heaven in a larger form." This, indeed, can be said of

angels, because they are more fully regenerate—men who have passed the ordeal, and been adjudged to heaven. But such language cannot with propriety be applied to any society of men here on earth. The above sentence, indeed, like the former one, is true enough in the abstract, but only in the abstract. Could we find any “collection or society of such persons”—that is, of persons who are certainly receptive of love and faith—that would, indeed, be a “church in a larger form.” But no such society can be pointed out. If you must not name a single individual, and pronounce him to be a church in the least form, how can you or dare you point to a whole society, and say, “This is a collection of such individuals?” The writer is confounding two very distinct things—and they have been too often confounded—namely, the Church *real* and the Church *apparent*. He mistakes a collection or society of persons, who are professors or receivers of the New Church doctrines, for a collection or society of persons who are internally receptive of love and faith. Such a society as this does not exist, probably, in the wide world; or, if it does, it is known to the Lord alone. No man can or dare pronounce any earthly society to be such.

Swedenborg very carefully distinguishes between the Church and a “*congregation* of the Church;” and by a “congregation of the Church,” he means precisely what we mean by a religious society—that is, a society of persons professing the doctrines of the Church. That Swedenborg makes such a distinction in plain and strong terms, will be seen from the following passages:—“Life constitutes the Church, but *not doctrine*, except so far as it be of life. Hence it is evident that the Church of the Lord is *not here nor there*, but that it is everywhere, both within those kingdoms where the Church is, and out of them, where the life is formed according to the precepts

of charity," (*A. C.* 8152.) Here our author plainly distinguishes between the Church *real* and the Church *nominal* or *apparent*. The Church real consists of those who are in the good of life, who are everywhere; but the Church apparent is what he refers to when he speaks of the kingdoms where the *Church* is. This outward or apparent Church he defines in the *Heavenly Doctrines* (n. 242) thus: "Where the Lord is acknowledged, and where the Word is, is *called* the Church." But though, for the sake of distinction of terms, this is *called* the Church, yet he is careful to show, that such believers in the Lord and possessors of the Word, are truly the Church only so far as they are in the good of life; for "doctrine alone," he goes on to say, "does not constitute the Church with man, but a life according to it," (*H. D.* 243.) And as the Lord alone knows how far the professors of doctrine live according to it, therefore He alone knows where the Church is.

But our author uses more emphatic language still on this point. "Those," says he, "who say they are of the Church, who are in the affection of truth, and not in the good of truth—that is, who do not live according to the truth—are much deceived; they are *out of the Church*, notwithstanding their admission into the congregation of the Church," (*A. C.* 3693). Is there not here a strong distinction drawn between the Church real and the Church apparent?—between the true Church, which is "not here nor there," and the Church merely so "called," composed of such as acknowledge the Lord and possess the Word, or, in other words, who are receivers of its doctrines?

But again, says our author: "They alone are of the Church, *in* whom the Church is; and the Church is in those who are in the affection of truth for the sake of the truth, and in the affection of good for the sake of good;

those who are in love towards the neighbor and in love to God. They who are not such, are not *of* the Church, howsoever they may be *in* the Church." (*A. C.* 10, 310.) Is there not here again a plain distinction drawn between the Church real and the Church nominal? In other words, between the state of love to God and men, which constitutes the essential Church, and that mere profession of doctrines, which constitutes the apparent Church?—between the Church proper and a mere "congregation of the Church," or a religious Society?

"But," says the writer, "there is also an external Church," and this, he thinks, is constituted of persons and societies of persons—plainly meaning persons who can be named, persons who are receivers of the doctrines. But Swedenborg does not so define the external Church. "The Church," says he, "is internal and external; they who are in the affection of good and truth from love to the Lord and charity towards the neighbor, constitute the internal Church, and those who are in external worship from obedience and faith, constitute the external Church." (*H. D.* 246.) So, then, the *external* Church consists, not of receivers of the doctrines merely, but of such as are "in external worship from obedience and faith." But you can no more judge of these than you can of the others; you cannot say what man has in him the true spirit of *obedience* and *faith*, and worships from that ground; that is known to the Lord alone. All you can say, all you can know, is, that such persons have put their names on our roll of members, profess to receive our doctrines, and come to worship at our temple. But such circumstances merely, do not make them members either of the Church internal or external as these are above defined by Swedenborg. It is the *spirit* that is in them that constitutes them either one or the other, or neither; and the condition of their spirit is known to the

Lord alone. Thus, then, a religious society, or what we call a New Church Society, is, in fact, neither the Church internal nor external; it is merely a society of receivers or professors of the doctrines.

From what has been said, an important inference is now to be drawn. If an individual receiver of the doctrines does not constitute a Church in the least form, nor a society of such receivers constitute the Church in a larger form, then it follows that an aggregate of such societies, as an Association or Convention is supposed to be, does not constitute the Church in a still larger form; for out of several nothings you cannot make a something. If a single receiver of the doctrines is *not* thereby a Church—and Swedenborg declares this when he says that doctrine does not constitute the Church, but life (*H. D.* 243), then a society of such does not constitute a true Church, nor, consequently, does any aggregation of such societies. Thus, the question is answered—*the Convention is not a Church.*

But here some one may ask, “May we not, however, *call* it a Church? because Swedenborg says, ‘that where the Lord is acknowledged, and where the Word is, is called the Church.’” I answer, No! that does not follow. Though Swedenborg makes that remark in a general way, he does not particularize nor give any authority for saying that a certain individual or society of individuals, acknowledging the Lord and the Word, is the Church or a Church. No harm follows from having the general idea in the mind, but great harm may follow from particularizing or personifying it (so to speak), that is, in fixing it upon particular persons or societies of persons. For, in that case, the appearance is in danger of being conceived of as a reality, whence great fallacies and falsities may be deduced. The appearance is, that the acknowledgment of the Lord and his Word—that is, doctrine—con-

stitutes the Church, but it is only an appearance, for life, not doctrine, constitutes the real Church (as above repeatedly shown). If, therefore, you speak of a society, or an aggregate of societies, of receivers of the doctrines, as a Church, you tend to fix the appearance in the mind as a reality. From which appearance confirmed, or from which fallacy, hurtful falsities will immediately begin to flow, as we know has already been the case; as that the Church being called "Mother" in the Word, therefore, a society of receivers, or an aggregate of societies, is a "Spiritual Mother." Whereas, the truth is, that a society or Convention being *not* truly a Church, is not a spiritual mother in any sense. It is nothing but a collection or assemblage of persons who profess to be receivers of the doctrines of the New Church, but how far they are truly *of* the Church, that is, how far the Church is *in* them, is known to the Lord alone.

2. But there is another ground to rest the argument upon, quite independent of the preceding, and, if possible, still firmer—another conclusive reason why the Convention is not a Church; and the consideration of this leads me to notice the writer's second fallacy. After stating that "we are taught that a single person who is receptive of this love and faith is a Church in the least form, and that a collection or society of such persons is a Church in a larger form, (which, as I have shown, is a truth only in the abstract, because no one can say what person or what society of persons is receptive of love and faith, but only what persons profess to receive the doctrines—and that does not make a Church,) he proceeds: "This being the case, I do not very well see how we can avoid the conclusion, that an assemblage of societies, or an Association, is a Church in a larger form, and a Convention, or still larger assemblage, is a Church in a still larger form." Now, I shall endeavor to show that this is a complete

non sequitur ; that there is no connection between the premises and the conclusion.

The premise is, that a single person receptive of love and faith is a Church, and a society of persons receptive of love and faith is a still larger Church. This is the premise which, in the writer's words, is the conclusion that "an assemblage of societies, an Association or a Convention is a still larger Church." "An assemblage of societies!" What societies?—to make a proper connection, the word *such* should be there—an assemblage of such societies ; that is, of societies composed of persons receptive of love and faith. That would be a logical deduction, but it would still express only an abstract truth ; for if you cannot and dare not pronounce a single person to be receptive of love and faith (for that is known to the Lord alone), and still less can point out a society of such persons, how much less an assemblage of such societies? But the writer, here, forgetting or disregarding the logic of the case, omits the word *such*, and says "an assemblage of societies," evidently meaning the existing societies of mere receivers of the doctrines—a very different thing, as has been shown, from societies of persons receptive of love and faith. This is a turning of the abstract into the concrete, of principles into persons, too hastily ; and the conclusion cannot be accepted by any just thinker. There is no proof presented (nor, indeed, can there be) that an Association or Convention is an aggregate of societies of persons receptive of love and faith ; that point is assumed, and the assumption cannot be admitted ; hence the inference that the Convention is a Church, is not sound.

But now I wish to take another position altogether, and this in order more fully to expose the second great fallacy to which I have referred. I altogether deny that an Association or Convention is an assemblage or aggregate of societies—even of societies of receivers

of the doctrines. This point has been all along assumed, and the assumption I believe to contain a fallacy and an error; and, if this can be shown, it will follow that the inference drawn from it, namely, that a Convention is a Church in a larger form, is fallacious.

The Convention, I affirm, is not an assemblage or aggregate of societies, but simply a body composed of *representatives* from societies—a very different thing. For, what is an assemblage or aggregate? It is a whole composed of many parts or particulars, and *containing within* it all the particulars of which it is composed. Thus the “Grand Man,” or Heaven is an aggregate of all the heavenly societies, because it includes all the societies, and all the individual angels of which the societies are constituted. But you cannot make an aggregate by *representation*; that is a mistaken idea; it is a purely natural, external idea, drawn from the course of political bodies in the world. In the republican system of government, since all the individuals who constitute the nation cannot conveniently meet together (as the people of Athens and the other small Grecian democracies used to do) to make laws and transact other business having reference to the public interests, the next best thing is to choose a few of the wiser individuals to meet at a certain place and transact the business for them. It is a mere expedient or convenience. But is the Congress or Parliament, thus formed, an aggregate of the nation? I deny it altogether: it is a mere body of representatives sent to do business *for* the nation; it is a mere body acting with power of attorney. When we speak of the State of Massachusetts, do we mean the Legislature of Massachusetts, or the Governor? When I say, “I love my country,” do I mean that I love the Congress, or the President, or the Government? Do I not mean that I love all the good people of the United States, the millions of American hearts that constitute the

nation, and that for them, if a soldier, I would fight and die? When I speak of the country, I do not think of the Congress. I care nothing about the Congress meeting once a year at Washington to do business. The Congress, if it behaves itself, and happens to be composed of good and wise men, and true patriots (which by no means is always the case), is a useful organ or instrument for doing the public business of the nation; but it is not the nation itself; far from it. So, the Convention is not the Church, nor an assemblage or aggregate of the societies of the Church: it is a mere business body, composed of representatives, meeting together once a year to do business *for* the Church; it is a mere organ or instrument of the Church, for the performance of certain uses. You cannot make a Church by representation.

The writer, it appears, once entertained the same opinion himself, "that the Convention was not a church, but only an institution of the church, or a representative body of societies of the church." But he was suddenly converted by a remark of Mr. Hyde's:—"You surely do not mean," said he, "that it is not a church, and certainly a church in a more enlarged form than any or most societies, if for no other reason because it is composed of more members." Now, is this a fact? Is the Convention composed of more members than any of the societies? Is its number of members to be compared with that of several of the societies? By referring to the last Convention Journal, I find that the number of members was about 70. Now, the Boston Society has on its roll, as it appears, some 500 members; the New York Society cannot have fewer than some 200; the Philadelphia Societies about as many, and that of Cincinnati cannot be far behind Boston. Even the small Bridgewater Society has more members than the last Convention had, viz. 74. So have those of Bath and Portland, viz. 77. It is true, Mr. Hyde pru-

dently qualified his remark, "more than any or *most* societies ;" but that qualification takes away all the force of the argument, and is an implied admission of its weakness. If there is a *single* society having more members, then, as to that society, the Convention is not "a church in a larger form."

But it may be said, it is larger by representation, that is, is collected from a wider extent of country. That may make it more fit as a business organ for the church, because it can thereby gather the wishes and opinions of a greater variety of members. But that circumstance does not constitute it "a church in a larger form." You cannot make a church by representation. For what is it that constitutes the church ? As before defined, it is love and faith ; and a single mind, possessing such love and faith, is a church in the least form ; and many minds possessing such love and faith are a church in a larger form ; and all such minds in the country, or the world, constitute the church in the largest form. But a few minds (say 70 in number)—even supposing them to be all genuine members, and not mere receivers of the doctrine, would not make the church in this largest form, simply because they came from different parts of the country—would they ? It is the quality of mind and heart that constitutes the church ; locality has nothing to do with it ; and therefore the quantity of church contained in 70 people, gathered from various places, is no more than the quantity contained in the same number dwelling in one place ; and hence it does not make a larger church, or a church in a larger form.

3. But there is another reason why a Convention is not a church, whether larger or smaller, and that is, because it is not a society meeting weekly for worship on the Sabbath day, but only a Body meeting once a year for business ; for though they may worship when they are

together, yet that is not the end for which they come together, (70 people would not travel 500 miles, merely to worship together one Sabbath ;) the object is business of one kind or another ; the worship is only incidental. That is plain. But what is it that constitutes a society of receivers of the doctrines a church, so far as they are a church? Is it not because they band together to support a regular service of worship on the Sabbath-day for their spiritual instruction? Is not that their main purpose? Is not that their chief end and aim as a society? and without this, would anybody think of them as being a church? Now, in this chief characteristic of a religious society, the Convention is wanting. Its *end* is business, not worship. This certainly determines that *it is not a church*.

As to "isolated members," as the writer says, if they have no other church than the Convention, then I am afraid it must be decided that they are without any ; for that is a poor church that affords its members spiritual instruction only once a year.

In conclusion :—For the various reasons above adduced, I think it is plain and certain, that the Convention is not a church in any sense of the word. It is a mere organ or instrument for the performance of certain external uses in connection with, or in behalf of the church ; very much such as is the London Swedenborg Society, or the A. S. P. and P. Society, either of which, is quite as much a church as the Convention. I trust, therefore, that this notion will be dropped, and that the writer referred to, will come and look at this and kindred topics, in a common sense light.

RESURRECTION OF THE NATURAL BODY.

BY REV. E. H. SEARS.

[The following, copied from the Monthly Religious Magazine, for January, is only the last half of the article as published in that excellent periodical. The entire article, like everything from the pen of our esteemed brother Sears, is highly interesting ; but the portion here given, is that in which our readers will be likely to feel most interest. The portion that precedes this, is mainly occupied with a history of this doctrine as held by the principal Jewish sects, at the time of the Lord's first advent ; and also with the views and controversies on this subject among the early Christians.—ED.]

From the year 170 onward, this doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh, appears with greater and greater distinctness. It appears at first faintly, in private summaries of belief ; more distinctly after the controversy with the Gnostics. The first professed *creed*, however, in which it is found, is one drawn up by the arch-heretic Arius, about A. D. 327 ; and the first public creed which contains it is that of the Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381.* Dr. Sykes seems to lay too much stress upon this fact ; for the reason why it was not sooner put into the public creeds doubtless was, that it was not deemed necessary, since it had not been extensively denied by Christian believers. Like many other doctrines, there was no philosophy about it until controversy made it a subject of investigation.

Once fairly inducted, it did not fail to gather about it the absurdities and fantasies for which it has a strong natural affinity. It became a question, whether the same flesh would rise again ; whether it would have the same

* Dr. Sykes's Enquiry.

form and sex ; at what age it would rise ; whether it would be the body that died and was buried, or some other of the series which the soul had occupied ; whether souls would know their own bodies by instinct ; and what would prevent the body from burning up and decomposing when roasted in hell-fire. On these points, the unbelievers did not fail to tax all the ingenuity of the faithful. Tertullian maintained that the identical dead body would rise again, particle for particle ; and Origen is said to have believed that bodies would rise in globular shape, as if rolling were an easier or better method of locomotion than walking. Augustine argues that burning material bodies will not necessarily destroy them ; he knows of worms that can be boiled in water without hurting them in the least. Thomas Aquinas thinks the identical substance will come up out of the grave that was put into it. The unbelievers were generally silenced, or rather evaded, by remanding all difficulties and contradictions to the Divine Omnipotence.

It is quite possible, as some writers have imagined, that the dogma of a fleshly resurrection was borrowed by the Jews from the Magians, and by the Christians from the Jews ; but we do not think that this accounts sufficiently for its genesis and descent to the Christian Church. How came the Magians by it ? for they are said to be the first and the only heathen that ever held it. They held it in company with kindred and cognate ideas. They had first sunk God in nature, and worshipped nature in the sun, moon, and stars, and hence their only conception of a real and tangible immortality was on the plane of nature, and for this the dead bodies must stand up again upon the earth. The Jews believed it only after the glory of Israel had waned, and they were looking for a temporal Messiah. The Christian Church received it, or at least developed it, after her day of childlike faith had passed.

There is a common genesis for all such heresies, and a common soil for them to germinate and grow in. *It is the tendency of the carnal mind to carnalize the truths of the Divine Word.* It is wisely permitted, in order that those truths may not sink out of sight and be entirely lost. It broke the descent of the Magians toward Atheism ; it broke that of the Pharisees towards blank Sadduceeism ; it gave the Christian church a foothold and saved it from sliding into Gnosticism. A carnalized faith is better than none at all, and to believe in the resurrection of the flesh is better than to lose sight of the eternal realities, or turn them into dreams and shadows.

It is a singular fact, however, that the idea of a *spiritual body*, distinct from the natural, and always investing the soul, is most plainly set forth in the writings of these Christian fathers. They seem to have had no notion of a disembodied state after death. Man still lives, and lives in human form, and with a bodily organization, after the material coverings have been laid in the grave. "Spirits after death," says Irenæus, "have a body adapted to their condition the same as before." Tertullian himself affirms the doctrine in its full integrity : "If souls be sensible of pain after death, and tormented with fire, then must they needs have some corporeity, for incorporeality suffers nothing." Origen affirms the same thing.* Augustine distinctly recognizes it : "Unde et spirituali erunt : non quia corpora esse desistent, sed quia spiritu vivificante subsistent."† They will be spiritual, not because they will cease to be bodies, but because they will subsist by the quickening spirit. The majority of the fathers believed, too, that angels live in substantial bodies. Why they did not perceive that these ideas rendered en-

* Cudworth's Intellectual System, Ch. V. Sec. III.

† De Civ. Dei, LXIII., CXXII.

tirely nugatory their notion of a resurrection of the flesh, it is difficult to imagine, unless, as is probably the case, they regarded matter as more real than spirit-substance, and the natural world more truly and brightly existent than the spiritual, and supposed, therefore, like the heathen, that departed spirits pined to get back to its glorious domains.

After the Reformation this notion of the resurrection of the flesh could not fail to be scrutinized and re-examined. In 1678 Dr. Cudworth's "Intellectual System" was published,—one of the grandest monuments of learning in the English language. In this he devotes over a hundred pages to the subject of the spiritual or celestial body, in which he shows that not only the ancient philosophers but most of the Christian fathers, believed that man lives in human form after death ; and their reasonings are set forth in such clear array, that the notion of a resurrection of the flesh sinks into unimportance. It became doubtful whether he really believed it, and his great work provoked replies from the orthodox, who charged him with bringing the doctrine into peril. They might well be alarmed, for the best English thinkers came to doubt it, as both unphilosophical and unscriptural, and to treat it as a lifeless tradition.

In the system of Swedenborg it not only is excluded altogether, but it is so driven out before the brightness of a more heavenly gospel that it looks too dingy and death-like ever to return. Swedenborg unfolds with scientific precision the doctrine of DEGREES OF LIFE. The spiritual world into which men enter at death is not a sublimation of the natural, not matter attenuated and rarefied, but a world *discreted* from this, having bodies differing in *genus* from natural ones, but a world more substantial, phenomenal, and brightly real. That is the substance, in fact, while this is only the adumbration of its realities, and

shows them in dim types and representations. The soul itself of every regenerated man, even while yet in the flesh, is ultimated in a celestial body, the exponent and image of its own intrinsic life, and the flesh only clogs and conceals its bursting glories. Heaven is already entered, and the celestial body put on, and death only takes the concealments of the flesh away. Just the opposite takes place with the souls that love and do evil and put on corruption. They shape to themselves a spiritual body, the exact effigy of their spiritual state, not to be burned in literal fire, but in the deforming lusts which even now waste the beauty of form and degrade it towards the bestial. And all this appears openly when the flesh falls off, and the man is drawn to his like in the other world. The bodies we shall wear eternally are not manufactured, but put on from within, even as the forms of tree or flower are the ultimations of its evolving life, or as the forms and the dress of the angels are the outshaping and the outrobing of the Christ who has been received within. Swedenborg does not make matter essentially evil and poisonous, as the Gnostics did ; but he, like Paul, makes spirit-substance and spirit forms in the heavenly state the shapings of a more plastic life, in the transference of a purer atmosphere, and the flush of a more celestial beauty, so that to come back to the earth in quest of the "flesh" we have put off, would be like the insect glittering in the morning light coming back to find the scales of the larva it had lost, and the loss of which gave freedom to its wings.

The doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh has been so shattered and dishonored, and is so utterly destitute of scientific basis, that it is seldom asserted now in its full grossness and literalism. But it is adhered to "in a sense" as important. It will not be given up readily, and

never in express terms. The reasons of this it is not very difficult to perceive.

The resurrection of the flesh is an idea which enters essentially into a system of theology, and it could not be taken out without great danger of loosening all the stones of the building. A general judgment of the assembled universe, a second literal coming of Christ, the conflagration of the world, its renovation for the abode of the risen saints in the millennial era, and in a terrestrial paradise, the punishment of the wicked in a local material hell—all these are concomitants of the resurrection of the flesh. Not only so : the whole scheme of salvation is made to hinge upon it. Men in material bodies can be admitted to a localized heaven or excluded from it, not according to what they *are*, but according to what they *believe*. They can be punished vicariously, and the whole plan of a substitutive atonement here comes in. All that kind of preaching which may be called *scenic*—appealing to sense or a sensuous imagination, and which undoubtedly has been most effective with the popular mind—requires the doctrine as a part of its machinery. In short, the resurrection of the natural body, under Christianity, even as under Judaism, and under the Magian religion, connects itself organically with a system of naturalized theology.

On the other hand, if man rises in a spiritual body at death, never more to come back again to the natural plane of existence, who does not see that the doctrine gathers and organizes around it a cluster of higher truths of transcendent importance? There can be no vicarious atonement, no artificial appointments to heaven and hell. Heaven and hell are formed and developed from within ; we are putting on now the beauty of the one or the deformities of the other, according to the shape into which our spirit-forms are growing and maturing every day. A

good life is perfecting the one, an evil life is hastening on the other. Christ saves us from within, as we receive and obey him, and from within outward clothes us in linen clean and white. The spirit-world is not a shadow, but a great reality ; we are in it now,—the veilings of sense only hide it ; we draw the angels around us as we become like them, or the fiends as we become like them, and death will lift up the curtain to show us the awful gulf between, and remand us to the society we have chosen. Christ cannot save us vicariously, but only as we receive his life in living worship and manifest and live it, and so put on the angel from him. He will come to judgment, not at the graveyards a thousand years hence, but in the spiritual world we enter at death ; not with the blare of literal trumpets, but the influx of his truth, that explores us and shows our quality, and separates us, not by an outward rule, but by a spiritual law, to heaven or hell, as one or the other has been formed within us. In short, this other doctrine of the resurrection connects itself organically with a spiritual Christianity.

So long as men live in sense, and judge spiritual things by sensual, they will have a sensualized religion, for they can have no other. When they can believe that the soul is a more intense reality than its dress and concomitants, the spirit-world more substantial than the material which is its type and shadow,—that it is already within us, and “broods over like the day,”—then spiritual Christianity will exclude its old corruptions, even as the spiritual body excludes the flesh as its death-robe when it needs it no more.

A SERIOUS WANT.

Not long ago, we were requested by a friend living out of town, who has a family of little children growing up around him, to select and send to him some books suitable for their instruction in the doctrines of the Church. We were surprised to find, however, on attempting to comply with his wishes, how scanty was the supply of this class of books from which to choose. All that we could find on the catalogues of any New Church publisher, were one or two catechisms, neither of them good, Mrs. Wilkins' "Lessons," Mr. Benade on Correspondences, and about half a dozen books of stories, which though unobjectionable, were of no particular use in teaching. We could find absolutely nothing which could be studied to any good purpose, by children from eight to fourteen years of age, and were obliged to report to our friend that he must teach his children from the works of Swedenborg, as well as he could himself. To this he answered that it was with the greatest difficulty that he could understand Swedenborg, much less could he expound him to children. And we imagine that our friend is not alone in his embarrassment. It seems to us that there is a serious need of elementary books on the doctrines of the New Church; something not metaphysical or philosophical, but simply didactic, and based upon the Word and the common perceptions of people. We have not even an unobjectionable catechism. That of the General Convention is too dry and incomplete; and the part of it devoted to such subjects as the character and mission of Swedenborg, Correspondences, the Second Coming of the Lord, &c., is out of all proportion to the remainder. That of the English General Conference, is better in this respect, but is still too abstract and metaphysical for children. Besides a cate-

chism, we want elementary books on the Duties of Christian Life ; The Government of the Lord's Providence ; His Incarnation and the Redemption of Mankind ; and a variety of topics of a similar nature. At present, we do not see how the children of a great many of us, are to be instructed in true Christianity, by parents of moderate capacities, and we invite communications from such of our readers as have had any practical experience on the point.

H.

H Y M N.

O ! from my bosom, Lord, remove
The blighting curse of selfish love !
How can my heart Thy love embrace,
While wedded to a love so base ?

One single spark, could I bestow,
Of love like thine,
Would cause within, a rapturous glow
Of heat divine.

Chase from my heart the phantom thought,
'That happiness with gold is bought ;
With all the wealth the world can give,
Without Thy love I cannot live.

'Thou biddest—" Love thine enemy—
To all do good ;
Seek no reward ;" but trust in Thee ;
And so I would.

But how, O Lord ! while in my soul,
The love of self has gained control ?
Blest slavery of Afric's race—
'Thy chains do not the soul debase.

Lord, set me from these shackles free—
This vile duress ;
Whilst more I love myself than Thee,
'Thou canst not bless.

A. W.

LITERARY NOTICES.

The Avoidable Causes of Disease, Insanity and Deformity. By JOHN ELLIS, M. D., Professor of the Principles and Practice of Medicine in the Western Medical College of Cleveland, Ohio: a Book for the People as well as for the Profession. New York: published by the Author, Room 20, Cooper Institute, 1860.—Among the encouraging aspects of our times, and as one of the many circumstances which indicate the descent of the New Jerusalem, may be mentioned the increasing attention which the subject of Physical Education has begun to receive from those who take the lead in educational and philanthropic movements. The best minds everywhere are beginning to admit that bodily health and vigor are of some consequence in this mundane sphere; that a good digestion has something to do with a good conscience; that shattered nerves, sunken eyes, pallid cheeks, long, thin and solemn faces, are not always the sure indications or necessary accompaniments of wise heads or pure hearts; that, despising the body, or overlooking its just demands and disregarding the laws of physical health, is not the best way to glorify God, or to elevate the human species; that we can never hope to rear a noble race of men and women—noble, we mean, in respect to intellectual and moral qualities—until the laws of our physical constitution are understood and scrupulously observed. What is the use of preaching cheerfulness to a confirmed dyspeptic? Better far to teach him how to improve his digestion, and then, perchance, more bright and cheerful feelings will come without the aid of preaching. And better still—would it not be?—to unfold the laws of health, and so teach the rising generation how to avoid dyspepsia, and a thousand other physical ills, which are the unavoidable result of ignorance and the violation of physical laws. This is precisely what the work before us aims to do. And we look upon it as a most valuable contribution to our physiological literature—all the more valuable because of its freedom from technical and unintelligible terms and phrases, and its complete adaptation to the popular wants. It is pre-eminently “a book for the people,” and one which we hope will be widely circulated, and extensively read. It is one of those books which impresses the reader with the conviction, that the author wrote it, not merely for the sake of making a book, but because he had something to say—thoughts that must be uttered, and truths which should be heeded.

Dr. Ellis believes that diseases may generally be avoided if the requisite knowledge be possessed, and people will but put their knowledge in practice. To impart that knowledge, and present at the same time adequate inducements to live up to it, is the object of his book. He discusses the spiritual or mental, as well as the natural causes of disease; shows the conditions requisite for physical development and preservation; traces the physical degeneracy, which he thinks has been going on in our country for many years, to the neglect or violation of these conditions; points out the proper and improper management of children, and the causes of their diseases and deformities, as well as of the great mortality among them; exhibits the imperfections in our systems of education, which lead to melancholy results both physical and moral; discusses the fashions and habits of our American ladies, to which he attributes a large proportion of the ill health and premature deaths among them; shows the need of proper amusements for both the young and old; has a chapter on the improper use of poisons—narcotics—opium—tobacco—and fermented drinks; and enters a just and seasonable protest against “excessive labor,” and especially the excessive *brain* labor of the clergy, whom he regards (and not without reason), as the chief of sinners in this respect. He thinks that “among no class in the community are the conditions required for a harmonious development and preservation, of both soul and body, more heedlessly violated than among the clergy;” that “they neglect needed amusements and recreation, as well as active labor, or other active exercise, almost entirely;” and that, “as a result, we have among them many narrow-minded men, bigots mentally, and physically sickly and inefficient.” We fear there is too much truth in this.

Then the various subjects treated in this volume are discussed not only in a calm and serious, but in a profoundly religious spirit. While handling the laws of our physical being, the author does not permit us to overlook or forget our nobler spiritual being, for the sake of which, chiefly, he would have the body well cared for, and its laws faithfully observed. And although nothing directly is said of the New Church, yet its principles and philosophy stand out prominently on many a page. How, indeed, could a New Churchman handle such subjects as are here discussed, without incidentally unfolding something of the New theology? for natural and spiritual laws, we know, are connected like body and soul. In illustration of our remark, take the following from the chapter on “spiritual or mental causes of disease.”

“Man is at one and the same time an inhabitant of two worlds; his external body is an inhabitant of the natural world, and his spiritual

body, which gives life to the natural body, is an inhabitant of the spiritual world. . . . Man's material body, then, is but the clothing of his spirit or soul, and must correspond to it in every particular. It follows that there cannot be an organ, member, or fibre in the body which possesses life, which does not derive that life from the spirit. The spirit being the real man, is of course in the form of man, or of the body." (p. 26, 27)

Again :

" When man partakes of its fruit [i. e., the fruit of the Tree of Life], it gives life and health to both soul and body. To live in accordance with the commands of the Lord, is the great end and aim of life. The Lord is the centre, and a firm reliance on the Divine Providence, gives peace, contentment, and quiet ; and an earnest desire to do good to all, leads to unity and harmony among men. No selfish or angry passions bear sway, and even the sensual appetites are under subjection to reason. Use is then the great object in all sensual indulgence. If a man eats and drinks, it will not be to gratify his appetite, but to give strength and substance ; and, of course, such food, and such only as will build up a healthy body, will be selected and used. So of the other sensual appetites ; use alone will govern their indulgence. So in regard to dress ; use alone must govern, and not vanity." (p. 31, 32.)

Upon the whole a most valuable book—containing so much wise and wholesome instruction, of which our American people stand especially in need, that we are not disposed to call attention to what seems to us here and there, an extreme or *ultra* view—especially as whatever leaning of this kind we discover, seems always to be in a safe direction.

Marriage and its Violations: Licentiousness and Vice. By JOHN ELLIS, M.D., &c., New York: Published by the Author. Room 20, Cooper Institute, 1860.—A small work of 48 pages, originally intended, as we learn from the author, to form a portion of the volume above noticed, "The Avoidable Causes of Disease," &c.; but for many reasons, now published as a separate treatise. It treats of marriage, divorces, abuses of married life, foetal murder, licentiousness, and solitary vice—delicate subjects, and treated with great delicacy, and at the same time with great freedom. It is a work that deserves to be carefully read by both sexes. On no other subjects, perhaps, is the great mass of people so profoundly ignorant, as upon the very subjects here discussed. Yet none are of more immediate or of higher practical importance. Dr. Ellis' work answers a demand, whose existence has long been felt ; and we anticipate much good from its wide circulation.

How gratifying it is to meet in a work from the pen of a medical and scientific man, such elevated views on the subjects of marriage and divorces, as the following for example :

“ If a man is a man, and a woman a woman, from the spirit, and not simply from the material body—the latter being but the clothing of the former—there must be as great a difference in the mental, or spiritual character of the two sexes, as there is in their physical configuration. If this is true, all controversy about equality, or superiority, is absurd, and worse than useless ; for man is superior in those qualities which constitute him a man, and woman in those which constitute her a woman ; and this is true, we shall find, both mentally and physically. The true ideal of a man, or angel, can only be formed by the union of the two in one ; on earth, joined in that sacred bond which man is not to put asunder, as it were flesh of flesh, and bone of bone, and thus prepared to appear, in that world, where, we are taught, the sensual marriages of earth have no place, as one ; joined together, as are the angels of heaven, by the Lord himself, not by man, and the governments of earth—a spiritual union.” * * *

“ The great ends of marriage are the present and future good and happiness of individuals, and the procreation, protection, development, and perpetuation of the species. In order to arrive at correct conclusions, it is important that we consider this subject in its relation to all these objects. If this life were the all of man we might consider it simply from a worldly point of view ; but as this is but the beginning of an endless life, we cannot fail to see that its bearing on the future life is far more important, and worthy of attention, than on the short time we tarry here, which is almost nothing compared with time without end. If the Providence of the Lord watches over us, and He is a good and wise parent, must it not have in view in all the allotments of earth, our eternal rather than temporary or worldly good ?”

Then on the subject of divorce, what could be more timely or sensible than the following :

“ But is this want of adaptation, or affinity, any excuse for applying for a divorce ? There are some enemies to social order and society—perhaps not willful in all cases—who teach that it is, and believe that divorces should be granted more freely than they are, by our civil authorities ; who teach that if husbands and wives do not love each other truly, they should not be required to live together, but should be divorced and allowed to marry again. Say some of these writers : “ it is legalized prostitution to require a husband and wife to live together under such circumstances,”—as though the marriage vows were but a farce, which might be annulled at pleasure, at the option of one or both of the parties, when the good of children, public morality, and the good and even stability of society, depend on the inviolability of the marriage tie during the life of the parties, in accordance with the Divine teachings ; for the Lord expressly teaches that there is but one cause for divorce, and that is adultery ; and that whosoever puts away his wife and marries again for any other cause, is guilty of adultery himself. Legislatures may legalize divorces which are sought for other reasons than the only justifiable one, but they cannot make them right and just

in the sight of Heaven, and in accordance with the demands of morality and the general good, to which all individual selfish interests should bow.

"Make divorces of more easy attainment, and the applications will increase rapidly in accordance with the readiness with which they are obtained; and justify the application on the ground of want of affinity or harmony, or true love, and three-fourths of the marriage contracts made at this day in our country, would be annulled within the first year of married life, if the parties were not restrained by conscience, public opinion, pecuniary interests, love of children, or some other selfish consideration; for, as we have seen, true love and harmony in the married state are only attainable as husbands and wives become regenerated—come to love the Lord and each other more than they do self."

The Validity of the Baptism of the Consummated Church, viewed in its Relation to the New Church. By THOMAS WILKS. New York: John Allen, 1855.—A recent advertisement of this pamphlet in a New Church weekly, coupled with an editorial commendation of its merits, has induced us to give it a re-examination, in the hope that, perhaps, five years of study and reflection since we first read it, might enable us to discover in it more sound reason and logic than it then seemed to us to possess; and that, after all, it might embody the truth on a point about which there has been considerable difference of opinion among receivers of the New Church doctrines. In this expectation, which, we confess, was very faint, we have been disappointed.

Mr. Wilks' proposition is, "that the baptism of the Consummated Church is not, according to the proper signification of the term, *Christian* baptism; that this baptism does not introduce into the Christian Church, nor does it insert into Christian societies in the spiritual world; that it bears no relation to, nor has the remotest connection with, the New Church; and that, as far as it relates to the uses of baptism, it is but a lifeless and useless ceremony. Therefore the inference is inevitable—members of the New Church, who have received no other baptism, are in reality unbaptized members," (p. 24.) By the "Consummated Church," we suppose Mr. Wilks means all the existing Christian churches which do not profess the doctrines of the New Church, as taught by Swedenborg; for, otherwise, his whole argument is inept, because no other religious bodies practice the rite of baptism, so far as we know. His idea, then, in a few words, seems to be, that the efficacy of a baptism depends upon the theological opinions of the minister who administers the ordinance, or those of the ecclesiastical body by whom he was ordained. He cites passages from Swedenborg, to the purport that baptism may be deprived of its usefulness, and fail of its proper effect, by reason of false doctrinal instruction in the after life of the recipient, and draws thence the conclusion, that the *intention*

of the baptizing minister to administer this false instruction, blights, as it were, the ordinance at the moment of its performance, and renders it a mere unmeaning ceremony. He goes even further, and holds, that baptism administered by any other clergymen than those of the organized New Church, is not only invalid, but positively pernicious; that it conjoins, not with heaven, but with hell, or, as he modestly expresses it, "societies composed of such spirits as are necessarily excluded from heaven," (p. 18.)

-Such a monstrous proposition does not require any formal refutation; and Mr. Wilks, in order to support it, is obliged to resort to several gross fallacies and misrepresentations of Swedenborg. One of these is the implied assumption at the outset, that baptism can only be administered by an ordained priest, and that, when so administered, it is the act of the church which ordained him. Mr. Wilks never seems to have suspected that no special *authority* to administer this ordinance is essential to its validity. Lay baptism has been recognized by Christians from the earliest ages as perfectly valid, and we all have heard recently of the case of the boy Mortara, where the Pope himself even *insisted* on the validity of a baptism administered by a servant-girl. So that even if a baptism by an Episcopal clergyman, for instance, be not good as a *priestly* baptism, we have a right to recognize it as a *lay* baptism. We can affirm the act, and disregard the character of the agent. If the instructions of the Institutor of the ordinance have been followed, we need not ask *who* it was that followed them.


Again, Mr. Wilks assumes (p. 17) that the various qualities of Christian churches—Presbyterian, Baptist, &c.—are each one conjoined with separate societies in the spiritual world; and that the baptism of each of these (including Swedenborgian ones) conjoins the recipient with the spiritual society of that church. To which it is a sufficient answer to say, that, if this be true, there is not the shadow of authority for it in the Word or the writings of Swedenborg. The passage cited by him (*T. C. R.* 680) only shows that a man's spiritual associates are selected according to his internal affinities, and those of the persons with whom he is in daily contact; and there is not a word which even hints at there being any difference between the *baptism* of one man and that of another.

But the great misconception which underlies the whole of Mr. Wilks' reasoning, is one that has been again and again exposed by intelligent readers of Swedenborg; namely, the idea that the Christian churches of the present day are identical with the Church consummated a century ago. Mr. Wilks quotes page after page of Swedenborg, concerning the one, and then, without the slightest misgiving, applies

every word of it to the other. Now, whatever may have been true of a body of men long since dead and buried, the same thing is by no means certain to be true of their great-grandchildren, who are living now. If Mr. Wilks wishes to know what is the spiritual state of the Episcopal, Presbyterian, or any other ecclesiastical organization at this present moment, he ought, in justice, to examine, not Swedenborg's old quartos, but the living exponents of the life and faith of those bodies as they exist among us. What would we think of a man who should proceed to pronounce an opinion concerning our nation and government, based exclusively upon records and statistics a hundred years old?—or write an essay upon the geography and climate of any country, the materials of which were drawn from the text-books of our great-grandfathers? Yet Mr. Wilks, and, we are sorry to say, a great many other respectable men in our denomination, continually commit just such an egregious blunder, when speaking of their fellow Christians of other religious opinions than their own. Their attention seems to be so absorbed in the petty affairs of the few hundreds, who—for reasons, which, in the main, we consider to be perfectly sufficient—have united, in separate organizations, for worship according to New Church doctrine in its purest form, that they are perfectly unconscious of the present condition of the rest of the world; and derive their opinions of it solely from the incidental facts given by Swedenborg concerning *his* contemporaries, which they light upon in the course of their theological studies. Some portions of what they ignorantly call a “dead and consummated” church, possess a thousand-fold more real life than any Swedenborgian societies we know of—that is, if fervent piety, kindness of feeling and behavior, zeal in works of usefulness, and a continual seeking after greater purity of life and a more complete obedience to the Lord's precepts, are any signs of such vitality. Who print the millions of Bibles every year distributed in the world—even the very copies used by Mr. Wilks and his colleagues in their daily studies and Sunday worship? Who send out the missionaries to preach the gospel to the unenlightened of the earth? Who found and maintain the institutions of learning, from which have come most of our New Church ministers? Who support the numerous benevolent institutions of our day for the relief of all the various spiritual and physical sufferings of our race? Whose are these church edifices thronged with devout worshippers, which are planted so thickly in every part of this land? Who, at this moment, are teaching to those multitudes of children from whom alone we hope for accessions to the organized New Church, those rudiments of Christian faith and practice, which shall be the foundation of the superstructure we expect to see raised?

Surely none but the very individuals who make up this "Consummated Church." It is nothing to the purpose to point to the nominal creeds and professed faith of the religious bodies to which these persons belong. A man's *real* belief is that according to which he *lives*, not that which his lips utter when he is catechized according to formulas learned in infancy. The fact is, that very few persons can be met with, who profess to understand, much less to believe, the dogmas of the churches with which they are nominally connected. They have independent creeds of their own, more or less approximating to the truth; and wherever we find a man practically embodying in his life the essentials of the New Church, it is the merest Pharisaism to sneer at him as an "Old-churchman," to disparage his worship, and ascribe to his acts of religious obedience to the Lord's commands, consequences of infernal mischief. We are heartily sick and ashamed of the tone of some of our brethren in this respect; and we pray most heartily that their eyes may be opened to the true nature of the spirits who inspire it.

We say all this without the least reference to the propriety or impropriety of re-baptizing any person who has received the doctrines of the New Church, and has doubts as to the true nature of his previous baptism. We can imagine that, in such a case, a second baptism, by quieting the mind, and renewing as it were his dedication to the Lord, may be of the greatest use. Only let us beware of an unseemly intolerance on the subject.

 DELAY OF OUR JANUARY NUMBER.—We feel that an explanation is due to our subscribers for the unusual delay of the last number of our Magazine. And here it is: Our desire to assist a poor man who had just started a printing-office with the laudable purpose of introducing female labor into the compositor's department, induced us to change our printer on the first of December, and commit our work to the new office. We were assured when we made the change, that the January number should be all printed by the 22d of December. But, instead of that, the binder was not able to get the sheets from the printer until the 10th of January; and then it was found that, in addition to a number of typographical errors, which the printer had failed to correct, there were so many imperfect copies, that we were unable to supply all our subscribers until more copies were printed. We have now returned to our former careful, prompt, and energetic printer (J. P. Prall, No. 9 Spruce street), and have not the least hesitation, therefore, in assuring our subscribers that, hereafter, the work will be regularly mailed before the first of every month.